

Global Game Industry: Level 7

(MLI26C738)

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Agenda for today

16:00 – 16:15 – touch base and sharing insights from exercises

16:15 – 17:15 – discussion on ethics, consumers as players

17:15 – 18:15 – debate on today's topic

18:15 – 19:00 – Among Us + debriefing



Today's learning outcomes

Understand how the lack of regulations is influencing gameplay and enjoyment

Reflect on how games are monetized based on the obsession – pleasure spectrum

Analyze ethical practices within game development studios

**Players as consumers,
ethics of video games**





A balancing act

Profits

Pleasure



But what if a pleasure becomes an obsession?



Or when this...turns into this?



However, ethics in video games goes beyond players.

- Management, HR
- Games
- Game development
- Marketing





But let's focus on the consumers for now.

First this:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=unVzwxmyeqs>

And then this:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=29EN9Anic9Q>

Bonus:

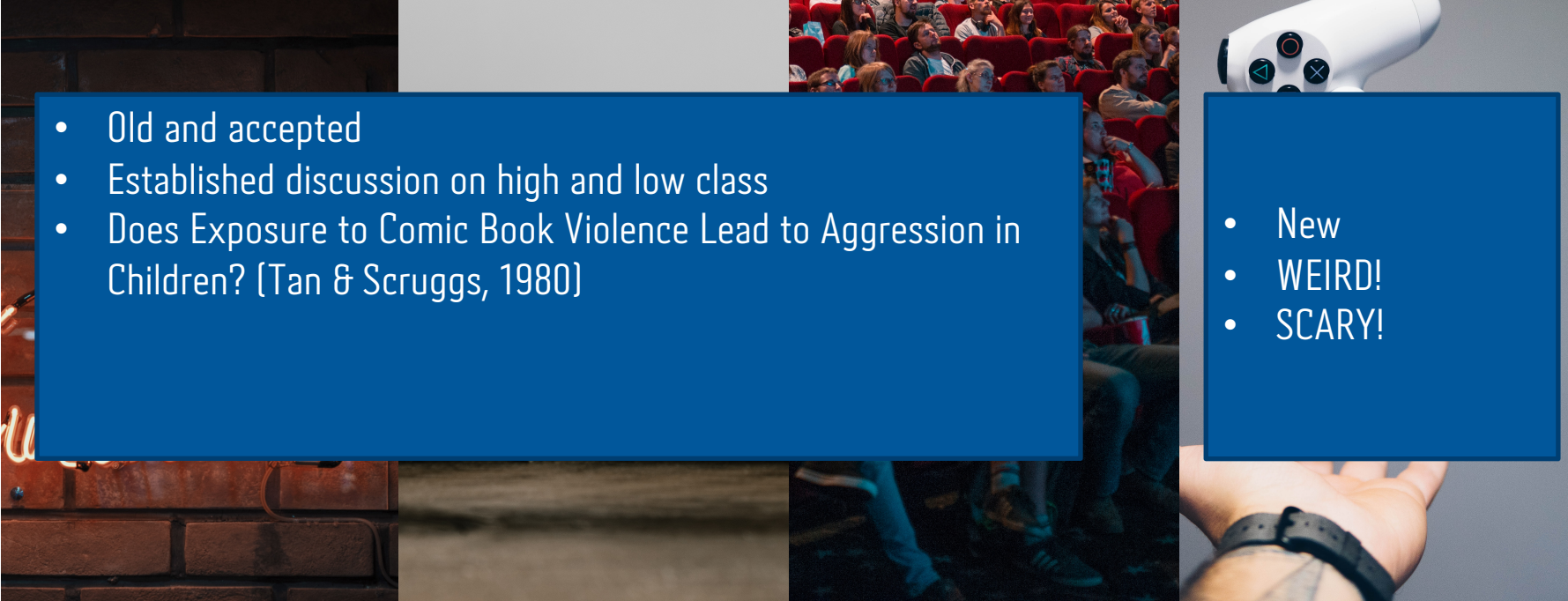
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uaf_Xjz6Mxs

A man with long blonde hair, wearing a dark suit, stands on a stage. He is positioned to the right of a white, illuminated podium. The podium has a conical top and the word "TEDx" printed in red on its front. The background is dark, and the stage floor is a light wood color.

TEDx



And let's put things into context

- 
- Old and accepted
 - Established discussion on high and low class
 - Does Exposure to Comic Book Violence Lead to Aggression in Children? (Tan & Scruggs, 1980)

- New
- WEIRD!
- SCARY!



So, do games cause violent behavior or not?

A common argument in the violent video game (VVG) literature is that the greater the realism of a game, the more it activates aggressive concepts, and the greater antisocial effects it will have on its players. In this paper, we therefore present two large-scale online experiments ($n = 898$ and $n = 1880$) which investigate the effects of two different manipulations of behavioural realism on the activation of aggressive concepts in VVGs. In neither experiment did increasing realism increase the activation of aggressive concepts.

Zendle et al. (2018)



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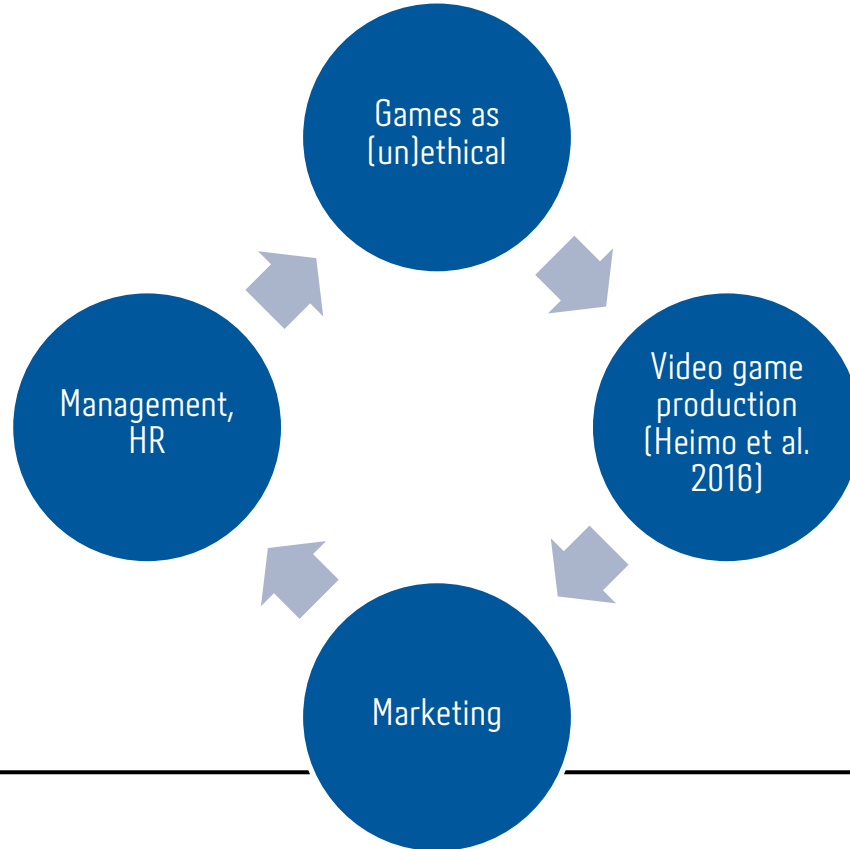
We need to adopt a more holistic view

An important first step will be for us to agree that interactive media can trigger physiologic effects in humans, and that we have some **control** over the quality and quantity of those effects. It is not clear that we have completed this basic first step, as language used in relevant discussions does not reflect that agreement yet.

Shokrizade (2018)



Ethical practices beyond games





Ethics of games and playing games

- Games as reinforcing or questioning ethics
 - Is it ethically right to portray video game characters from a single perspective?
 - [Video] games as raising awareness
 - These historically bound, though. Case: Colonization (1994)





James town

Spring 1523

Gold: 2000 Tax: 0%



Moves: 1

Locat: (43, 49)

Eng. Missionaries

Expert

Forest)

"Greetings, Discoverer Walter Raleigh, and welcome to New France. We have justly claimed all of this land in the name of His Most Christian Majesty, King Louis, and we are here to promote the greater glory of France. Please do not interfere with this God-given mission."



Ethics in game development

- Content
 - How do we portray the game world?
 - What kind of characters are playable?
 - Dialogue?
 - Monetization logics
 - If games are transformative, how do questionable practices transform the developers?
-

NEVER ALONE
< KISIMA INNITCHUNA >





ASSASSIN'S
CREED
ORIGINS

Questionable ethics in action

Logic here:

- Give rewards
- Lose matches
- Need to get more rewards
- Tougher opponents
- And so on...





Marketing video games

- False promises
 - Features that will not be part of the final release
 - No gameplay footage, only cinematics
- Mixed messages
 - Racist, offensive



PlayStation.
Portable
White
is coming

Check
out
PSP
at the
Diesel
Store.



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 - For more content, check: <https://www.thegamer.com/15-worst-video-game-marketing-fails-in-history/>
-



Managerial practices in game companies

- Crunch
 - Working excessively long hours for a long period of time
- Industry itself still not that diverse
 - <https://www.igda.org/news/381234/IGDA-DSS-2017-Press-Release.htm>
- Fame vs. reality
 - “Of course everyone wants to create games” argument utilized far too often
 - Job stability low, job rotation high





Ethics and video games: conclusion

- Moving beyond the “games are violent and thus cause violent behavior” argument to develop more granulated discussions
 - However, such discussions overtly focused on Western countries. Why is that?
- Not only game-related: also development, monetization, marketing, managerial practices etc.
- How to balance between profits and obsessions, fun and crunch?
- Question of time? Practices become more ethical as time passes by and the industry matures?



The great class debate!





The great class debate

- Preparations: 20 minutes
 - Debate: 20 minutes
 - Debriefing: 20 minutes
 - Class divided into three camps (2 x 3)
 - Topic: Battle pass – good or bad for the player
 - Flow of the debate: opening statements, debate, closing statements (facilitated by the moderator)
 - Teams: for, against, moderators
 - Moderators' role is to define victory conditions and ensure smooth and respectful flow of the debate
-



Teams

For 1 Musa, Alex D., Ville, Daniel, Nhi, Laura	For 2 Riku, Matthieu, Severi, Liia, Aleks, Sampo
Against 1 Teniola, Kerkko, Niklas J., Simo L., Paul, Vilma	Against 2 Antti, Adrien, Sointu, Niklas L., Indrek, Alexander W.
Moderators 1 Anh, Simo H., Joonas, Onni, Neea, Kalle	Moderators 2 Oscar, Osama, Pyry, Niklas P., Tseyang, Toivo

Divided into two breakout rooms





Insights from the debate?

- Who won?
 - What did you learn?
 - Any thoughts on the debate as a learning method?
 - Anything else you'd like to share?
-

INNERSLOTH PRESENTS

AMONG US





Key takeaways

- Ethics in games goes beyond games: management & HR, games, game development, marketing
 - How to balance between profits and obsessions, fun and crunch?
 - How analyzing games can inform our approaching to developing / making money out of games?
 - South Park has an interesting episode on ethics in video games: S18E06 (Freemium Isn't Free)
-

What did you learn today?



We all face the same questions every day:
What do I want? And how can I get it?
How can I live more happily
and work more effectively?

1 **2** **3** **4** **5** **6** **7**

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Preparations for tomorrow

- Create a Twitch account and follow Johnathyn so you can attend the session
 - Read Lehtonen & Harviainen (2016) and section 4.3 from Kerr (2017)
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Keep up the good work!

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