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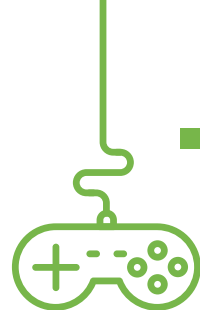
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Acta Ludologica is a scientific journal in the field of games and digital games. The journal contains professional scientific reflections on digital games; it also offers academic discourses on games, especially media and digital competencies, creation, design, marketing, research, development, psychology, sociology, history and the future of digital games and game studies.

Acta Ludologica is a double-blind peer reviewed journal published twice a year. It focuses on theoretical studies, theoretical and empirical studies, research results and their implementation into practice, as well as professional publication and scientific reviews of digital games.

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Identity in the Cyberspace of Digital Games

Our everyday life shifts more and more into the cyberspace of digital media, a significant segment of which is represented by digital games. The cyberspace of digital games, which develops together with the advancing possibilities brought by digital media, offers a high standard of not merely entertainment, but also more serious forms of games, for example educational games. It is implicitly assumed that the online world of digital media has an effect on the human. But what effect does it have on a human's identity? What are the possibilities and what are the risks?

What is real identity? Real identity in a human is shaped by these four dimensions: 1. human body – external dimension (physical); 2. memory, mind, conscience, subconsciousness, 'me' – internal (mental); 3. social dimension – interpersonal relationships; 4. cultural – epoch dimension. Real identity is generated at the intersection of the physical, mental, social and cultural dimensions. Within it, the most important seems to be the mental identity, as it is where the identity core – the 'me' of a person – originates. A human's identity cannot be understood as something permanent and supertemporal, but dynamic and flexible in the continuity of development of the body, mind, society and culture. The real identity of a human therefore resembles more the so-called Wittgenstein's Eye, which becomes the object it sees, than the a priori given Cartesian Cogito.

How is identity changing in the cyberspace of digital games? The highest degree of virtualisation will be taken by an avatar, as a representation of a player in the cyberspace of digital games, because we can freely create an avatar using some of the quite extensive programmed features. To understand identity, for example the in digital games *The Sims* or *World of Warcraft*, it is important to realise two main means of constructing the player's avatar: 1. The first approach features 'static', figurative constructing of a player's representative. This construction is based on the many possibilities given by the game. Thus the avatar becomes a rich reflection of the player's individual and collective ideas, dreams, idealisations but also stereotypes.

2. The second approach features 'dynamic' planning, graduation of the story and especially social interactions in which the identity of the player's avatar is developed. Social interactions are most

commonly realised between the player and the computer, but the defined rules of the game evoke reality very strongly, with real relationships between people. The player can construct their ideas and dreams that can never be fully constructed in real life.

The player's identity in the cyberspace of digital media can be changed or developed hand in hand with the changing degree of virtual reality. Strong identification with an avatar in a digital game cannot come without any influence on our real life and real identity, since it leaves its traces in our thinking, in our memory, which is transferred via neuroplastic changes in our brain. Thanks to digital games we realise more clearly that also our real identity is constructed, changeable and multiplicable. Multiplication of identities in the cyberspace of digital media can be very exciting and enriching and thus makes digital games a very attractive commercial product. On the other hand, we need to learn to keep a distance and critical attitude to such an environment, because excessive multiplication and experiments with identities can also represent a risk for a human's identity.

The contributions in this issue more or less also deal with the problem of the relationship between the online and offline worlds. The first article by S. Shin examines the digital game as a uniquely positioned medium for imagining a better world and themselves and, subsequently, facilitating a shift in cultural attitudes in a politically progressive manner. The study from Ł. P. Wojciechowski and A. J. Shelton describes the creative potential of the specific functionality of photo modes in digital games. In his study, D. Jukić claims the true character of the game is manifested in the self-pleasure of relieving the individual but also in the imagination and beauty that the game provides. The article by M. Horrigan explores nulltopia, the non-space between one world and another, in relation to digital games. The contribution by K. Jancovics discovers the many layers and methods of the horror genre, from spatiality through focalization to temporality. L. Škripčová, in the last article, examines the segment of digital games in relation to media convergence.

All contributions including interviews and reviews represent a valuable benefit to the knowledge of the world of digital games, and I recommend them to all readers who are interested in this topic.

prof. PhDr. Slavomír Gáliik, PhD.

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