Introduction: Exploring the Frontiers of Digital Gaming: Traditional Games, Expressive Games, Pervasive Games

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Since the turn of the millennium, the study of digital games has taken a lot of space in the academic endeavours focussing on ludic manifestations. Many literature reviews of contemporary game studies essentially focus on the work being done on this format (Rueff, 2008; Zabban, 2012). Clearly, where digital games are discussed during conferences, in dedicated books and journal issues, reflections on non-digital games or other experiments at the margin of video games don't receive as much attention, even though they are continually developing.

For more than a century now, scholars from many disciplines have contributed occasionally to a better understanding of these "classical" games. For instance, in mathematics and economic sciences, suck work has led to the famous game theory (Morgenstern & von Neumann, 1944 ; Nash, 1951). We are also referring to the anthropological and sociological studies conducted by Johan Huizinga and Roger Caillois, which remain essential in game studies up to this day. Since the 1980s, the study of roleplaying games (Caïra, 2007 ; Bowman, 2010), wargames (von Hilgers, 2008 ; Sabin, 2012) and board games (Schädler, 2007 ; Hinebaugh, 2009) led to many publications, albeit without the same frequency seen in the subfield of digital game studies. In this context, it is interesting to note that the work being done on digital games often reference publications about "traditional" games, be it to construct a theoretical framework (Frasca, 2001 ; Salen & Zimmerman, 2004) or to convey comparative studies (Trémel, 2001).

These remarks encourage us to explore the frontiers and the porosity that digital games share with other related fields, questioning the relevance of establishing relations, confrontations, distinctions or assimilations. For instance, one might wonder what continuities and modifications are established in the migration from a traditional support to a digital one (or vice versa), notably in terms of rhetoric and value. While the notion of procedural rhetoric is now clearly established to reflect on the transmission of discourse through video games, is it transposable "as is" for non-digital games? Piotr Sterczewski raises similar questions in his paper on Polish historical board games. Similarly, do concepts such as gamification benefit from being revisited outside of their point of origin? Mathias Fuchs explores this issue by reintegrating the notion in a long lineage that goes as far back as the 18th century.

Going the opposite direction, can more encompassing theoretical frameworks and domains, which encapsulate indistinctly digital and traditional games, be called upon to analyse the specific aspects of each medium? Victor Cayres and Adolfo Duran's paper tries to take on this challenge by proposing a dramaturgical analysis of *World of Warcraft*. Similarly, Alexandre Hocquet's contribution seeks to resituate the *Football Manager* series within questions relevant to the studies of modelling and software development. In doing so, he is also interested in the links between ludic props coming from different material realms. These material relations (and their experiential implications) between two types of seemingly distinct props are also at the center of Carl Therrien and Joyce Goggin's reflections. Their paper demonstrates that many aspects of body construction in the Matel *Kiddles* series of doll and the *Crysis* series of first-person shooter games can be related. From digital gaming to traditional gaming, many questions about the frontiers/porosity between the real, the fictional and the playground arises; a paper on pervasive games and cultural institutions (by Diane Dufort, Federico Tajariol et Ioan Roxin) seeks to address some of these questions.

The creation or removal of frontiers can also occur between gaming and the encompassing realm, or between different types of games. In this special issue, the notion of expressive games is defined and discussed in two papers (from Sébastien Genvo and Gabrielle Trépanier-Jobin) that reflect on research-creation practices; these projects address real life issues and serious topics, allowing players to explore individual, psychological, social,

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cultural and political problems. This type of game typically emerges from the independent scene, and has been gathering more and more interest in recent years (for instance with *Cart Life*, *Gone Home*, *Papo & Yo*, *Papers Please*, etc.) In a way, these games realize the wish formulated by Gonzalo Frasca in the early 2000s to see more games tackle real life issues. One of the pragmatic challenges faced by the design and reception of expressive games is to reconcile the entertainment function that is expected from games with the sensitive themes that are put forward. Expressive games also open up discussions about serious or persuasive games, which are designed to be used in a specific context of persuasion, education, or to affect real changes in the world. All these elements make it necessary to question the frontier between game and non-game, or to redefine the ludic at its core.

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This special *Kinephanos* issue prolongs the reflections that emerged during two events organized at the Université de Lorraine by the Centre de recherche sur les médiations in November 2014: a one day workshop on expressive games that was held to underline the launch of the Expressive gamelab in Metz, France (under the supervision of Sébastien Genvo), along with the conference "From 'traditional' games to digital games" in Nancy, France (under the supervision of Sébastien Genvo and Stéphane Goria).

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