

AUTOPLAY

GAMING IN THE AGE OF AUTOMATION

Call for Papers for a special journal issue

Currently, at the edge of the new digital frontier, automation and smart algorithms are gaining immense social attention, enticing, as mechanisation and machines before, as much wonder as awe. Automation affects all aspects of life. Although it remains most noticeable in the context of work and the fourth industrial revolution, it also plays a large, albeit questionable, role in the creative domains - in music, visual arts, literature, film and digital games. Some of the recent examples include Sony's first fully AI produced music album, J. Walter Thompson's 3D printed Rembrandt "created" by deep learning algorithms, *Sunspring* sci-fi film co-written by AI, or Google's experiments with natural language learning and poetry, amongst many others.

Perhaps, nowhere in the creative industries is the "automatic turn" more visible than in virtually summoned worlds. Artificial Intelligence-driven characters and environments have been part of video games for quite some time now. Currently, automated gameplay or automation-driven design processes are even more prevalent - procedurally generated worlds come to being, new self-playing game genres emerge ("idle" games), and bots are ever more popular means of automating in-game tasks or populating the already existing games (e.g. *League of Legends*). Automated game generation systems and design assistants are underway.

Games are a mirror of our culture. They reflect current trends, vital social changes, and concerns. It is no coincidence that self-playing "idle" games rise on the current gaming horizon, and bots populate online virtual worlds. But how to make sense of autoplay? How does automation change the ludic landscape? What do gamers think of their fellow bot-players? These are just some of the current questions that we would like to pose and find answers to.

Our aim is to capture the current automated ludic moment, and open an interdisciplinary space for discussion bringing together diverse research perspectives and examples dealing with the relationship between automation and gaming. Some of the addressed questions and themes may include, but are not limited to:

- ☐ Automation of (game)play
- ☐ Self-playing systems
- ☐ The practice of "idling"
- ☐ Autoplay modes and game genres
- ☐ The use of macros and bots in games
- ☐ Botting and its perception by the gaming community
- ☐ Bot-populated gameworlds
- ☐ The relationship between gameplay and fair play
- ☐ Automation of drudgery versus automation of pleasure

We are welcoming contributions from a variety of disciplines, such as:

- ☐ Game studies
- ☐ Design studies
- ☐ Philosophy
- ☐ Media studies
- ☐ Digital humanities
- ☐ Digital Culture studies
- ☐ Science and technology studies
- ☐ Anthropology
- ☐ Social sciences

If you would like to join the discussion, please submit the title and a **350-500** word long abstract of the proposed paper by **30th of May 2017** to the editors. Please include the following information in your abstract: Name, Institutional affiliation, E-mail address, Title of the proposed article, 6 Keywords, and Bibliography. Make sure to place AutoPlay Proposal in your e-mail's theme. We are planning to submit this special issue proposal together with selected articles to the Journal of Gaming and Virtual Worlds. Our goal is to release the publication in summer 2018.

We are looking forward to hearing from you,

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