



LUND UNIVERSITY

Problem Gaming in an everyday perspective (Research Panel)

Enevold, Jessica; Thorhauge, Anne Mette; Gregersen Lindegaard, Andreas; Karlsen, Faltin; Lundedal Nielsen, Rune Kristian

Published in:

Proceedings of DiGRA 2015: Diversity of Play: Games-Cultures- Identities

2015

Document Version:

Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

[Link to publication](#)

Citation for published version (APA):

Enevold, J., Thorhauge, A. M., Gregersen Lindegaard, A., Karlsen, F., & Lundedal Nielsen, R. K. (2015). Problem Gaming in an everyday perspective (Research Panel). *Proceedings of DiGRA 2015: Diversity of Play: Games-Cultures- Identities*. <http://www.digra.org/digital-library/forums/12-digra2015/>

Total number of authors:

5

General rights

Unless other specific re-use rights are stated the following general rights apply:

Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from the public portal for the purpose of private study or research.
- You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- You may freely distribute the URL identifying the publication in the public portal

Read more about Creative commons licenses: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/>

Take down policy

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

LUND UNIVERSITY

PO Box 117
221 00 Lund
+46 46-222 00 00

Problem gaming in an everyday perspective

Anne Mette Thorhauge, Andreas Gregersen

University of Copenhagen
Karen Blixensvej 4
Copenhagen, Denmark
+4535328100

annemette@thorhauge.dk, agr@hum.ku.dk

Faltin Karlsen

Westerdals Oslo School of Arts, Communication and Technology
Schweigaardsgate 14
Oslo, Norway
+4790737088

fk@westerdals.no

Jessica Enevold

University of Lund
Helgonavägen 3
Lund, Sweden
+ 462220419

jessica.enevold@kultur.lu.se

Rune Kristian Lundedal Nielsen

IT University of Copenhagen
Rued Langgaardsvej 7
Copenhagen, Denmark
+45 7218 5154

rkln@itu.dk

ABSTRACT

In this panel we take a critical look at problem gaming. We question existing approaches that tend to draw on concepts from clinical psychology and we introduce everyday life and the general wellbeing of youth as an alternative perspective.

Keywords

Video game addiction, problem gaming, children and youth, everyday life

INTRODUCTION

The concept of "video game addiction" has gradually replaced the depiction of violence in video games as a key issue of concern among parents and professionals. The concept refers to situations where (predominantly) young (predominantly) men neglect other activities in their everyday lives in order to play video games. As follows from the term "addiction" the public common sense as well as a considerable part of research draw

Proceedings of DiGRA 2015: Diversity of play: Games – Cultures – Identities

© 2015 Authors & Digital Games Research Association DiGRA. Personal and educational classroom use of this paper is allowed, commercial use requires specific permission from the author.

heavy parallels to alcohol abuse or psychological disorders applying either a neurophysiological or a clinical psychological approach to the issue (e.g. Gentile 2009). Typical to these approaches is the idea that the game is a direct cause to the problems and that possible pathological patterns can be derived directly from specific gameplay patterns irrespectively of context. In parallel to this widely held belief, however, a substream of studies has taken a more sociological and contextual approach focusing on the social context of the gamers in question (e.g. Linderoth & Bennerstedt 2007). This panel will continue in a similar vein. The aim is not to deny that a phenomenon such as problem gaming may exist, but rather to question whether the term addiction as imported from neurophysiology or clinical psychology does sufficiently describe it. Accordingly, the aim is to redefine the concept theoretically and empirically and to question simple causal relationship such as the direct link between gameplay patterns and addiction. The panel will introduce everyday life, family and youth as alternative perspectives on problem gaming and the individual presentations in the panel will take a range of perspectives on this issue:

Rune Kristian Lundedal Nielsen will initiate the panel with a critical discussion of existing measures of video game addiction. Nielsen will track the historical roots of the diagnostic criteria of video game addiction from Fisher's (1994) DSM-IV-JV (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual-IV-Juvenile Arcade Video Game) to the American Psychiatric Association's (2013) Internet Gaming Disorder. The abstract components of the concept of video game addiction are traced over time and related to the individual items of current measures. Through a review and comparison the validity of current measures are questioned as the individual criteria are discussed in terms of how they are translated into specific questions that are instantiated in current measures such as Gentile (2009), Lemmens, Valkenburg and Peter (2009), and Pontes, Király, Demetrovics, & Griffiths (2014). The analysis defines three critical steps of translation and asks what, if anything, has been lost in the process.

Following up on this, Anne Mette Thorhauge and Andreas Gregersen will present findings from a questionnaire survey using an alternative type of measure, that is, self-reports on media habits and the general wellbeing of players and non-players. Our dataset combines survey responses from a stratified random sample of Danish 10-18 year olds (n= 1560) with socio-demographic background variables. This dataset and the resulting analyses of game playing behaviour are, to our knowledge, the first of their kind. The presentation will discuss whether and to what degree respondents with specific gameplay patterns differ from the general population with regard to their well-being: Among the findings presented will be a significant association between family conflict and particular types of games which will lead up to the two following presentations.

Jessica Enevolds presentation takes a family and parental mediation perspective on problem gaming. The lack of young Swedish gamers' perspective on everyday playing practices has to some extent been remedied by Linderoth and Bennerstedt (2007) and Linderoth and Olsson (2010), but a parental perspective is still largely missing in the research. Between every active, and at times problematically active, gamer in Sweden, stand a number of, often worried and concerned, parents. This presentation inventories some of the fundamental problems parents of game/screen "addicted" children grapple with. It focuses on families in which children's gaming is so problematic that parents have sought professional help, and illustrates how these parents find themselves in a predicament: their child's excessive gaming dominates their everyday life, in terms of their trying to manage their child's absence from school, loss of off-line friends and

disturbed sleeping patterns. But their aims to reduce their children's' IT use also conflict with governmental and educational policies and aims to increase students' and citizens' digital media use.

Finally, Faltin Karlsen will question whether game design can be said to have any importance at all. MMORPG is the game genre that has received most attention from psychological research on problem gaming (Kuss and Griffiths 2011). One reason for this is that players of online games on average spend considerable more time on playing than players of other genres (Williams et al. 2008). The reward schedules that are characteristic of this genre are often employed to explain excessive use. Karlsen argues that the social aspects of MMORPGs may offer a better explanation as to why players play excessively. While the never-ending nature of this genre in large explains the long-term dedication of players, the social life within the game explains why especially time-demanding gaming practices, like raiding, have gained popularity. The focus on structure, and the general aim to develop universal criteria for "online game addiction" are also at odds with the fact that gaming practices are in a constant flux.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- American Psychiatric Association. (2013). *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 5th Edition: DSM-5 (5 edition.)*. Washington, D.C: American Psychiatric Publishing.
- Fisher, S. (1994). Identifying video game addiction in children and adolescents. *Addictive Behaviors*, 19(5), 545–553. doi:10.1016/0306-4603(94)90010-8
- Gentile, D. (2009). Pathological video-game use among youth ages 8 to 18: a national study. *Psychological Science : A Journal of the American Psychological Society / APS*, 20(5), 594–602. doi:10.1111/j.1467-9280.2009.02340.x
- King, Daniel L., Delfabbro, Paul H., and Griffiths, Mark D. (2010). Video game structural characteristics: a new psychological taxonomy. *International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction*, 8(1), 90-106.
- King, Daniel L., Delfabbro, Paul H., and Griffiths, Mark D. (2011). The role of structural characteristics in problematic video game play: An empirical study. *International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction*, 9(3), 320-333.
- Kuss, Daria Joanna, and Griffiths, Mark D. (2011). Internet gaming addiction: A systematic review of empirical research. *International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction*, 10, 278-296.
- Lemmens, J., Valkenburg, P., & Peter, J. (2009). Development and validation of a game addiction scale for adolescents. *Media Psychology*, (2007), 77–95. doi:10.1080/15213260802669458
- Linderöth, Jonas & Bennerstedt, Ulrika (2007). *Att leva i World of Warcraft [Elektronisk resurs] : tio ungdomars tankar och erfarenheter*. Stockholm: Medierådet. Reprinted 2012. Accessible online: http://medieradet.se/upload/Rapporter_pdf/Att_leva_i_World_of_Warcraft.pdf
- Linderöth, Jonas & Olsson, Camilla (2010). *Världen som spelplan: gränsöverskridande i onlinespelkulturen*. Stockholm: Medierådet. Reprinted 2012. Accessible online: http://www.statensmedierad.se/upload/Broschyrer_PDF/Varlden_som_spelplan_2012.pdf
- Pontes, H. M., Király, O., Demetrovics, Z., & Griffiths, M. D. (2014). The Conceptualisation and Measurement of DSM-5 Internet Gaming Disorder: The

Development of the IGD-20 Test. PLoS ONE, 9(10), e110137.
doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0110137

Williams, Dmitri, Yee, Nick, and Caplan, Scott E. (2008). Who plays, how much, and why? Debunking the stereotypical gamer profile. *Journal of computer-mediated communication*, 13, 993-1018.