

lost in science – game(s) for change

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The title of this presentation refers to Jane McGonigal’s www.avantgame.com site, where she advocates the relevance of games for real life, as well as to the book *Deep Time of the Media*, Zielinski (2006), in which the author discloses how individual researchers, such as Galvani, Volta and Ritter, and later Walter Benjamin, explored how technology and media may enhance the inherently limited perceptual capabilities of humans, by experiments that sometimes jeopardized their own health, and often the relation with the institutes in which they worked. Of course, Timothy Leary, of the famous *tune in, turn on, drop out* slogan may serve as another example. Looking back at my earlier work, Eliëns (1979), Eliëns (1988), I cannot help but share the feeling of being somewhat lost in science, and take the invitation of writing this essay/presentation as an opportunity to reflect on how the various strands in my education, art, philosophy, cognitive psychology and computer science are related, and what my *long walk through the institutions*, to borrow a phrase from Daniel Cohn-Bendit, leader of the 1968 french student-revolt, has contributed to the fields of AI and Multimedia.

introduction – game as *social system*

	syntax	semantics	pragmatics
actor(s)	players/places	roles	goals
rule(s)	events/exploration	evaluation	facilitators
resource(s)	game space	situation	context

alternate reality games (ARG) / TINAG¹

At the end of the trailer for the movie *AI: Artificial Intelligence*, the phrase *This Is Not A Game* flashed in red. More than a mere coincidence, the trailer was the *Rabbit Hole* (entry point) into the massive online promotion that gave birth to the current ARG community. The promotion, now regularly referred to as *the Beast*, took hundreds of thousands of players on a wild ride throughout which the not-so-quiet screams of *This Is Not A Game* could be heard.

development(s) – AI versus multimedia

- **AI** – knowledge representation, search algorithms, machine learning
- **multimedia** – rich internet application, games, interactive video

research – topical media & game development

- **intelligent agents** – VRML/X3D (virtual) environments
- **3D digital dossiers** – concept graphs
- **interactive video** – immersive hyperlinked playlists

education – what I talk about when I talk about *smart media*

creative technology / new media

- **smart technology** – sensors, robots, smart/intelligent systems
- **new media** – web-applications, games, interactive visualisation

conclusion(s) – paradigm shift(s)?

... relationships are things that happen only in a virtual world, and we are able to move backwards and forwards between the physical world of interactions (real events) and the virtual world in which these events are constituted into relationships in order to be able to understand what the significance of specific actions is or might be, or how two relationships impinge upon eachother.

The Human Story, Dunbar (2004)

¹www.argn.com/2005/04/this_is_not_a_game

the main conclusion that follows from our description of **attitudes to innovation**, except at the very ends of the chain, there is an **inherent resistance** to the kinds of **radical change** at the systems level that seems to be necessary to solve the major design and planning problems of our time ...

..., I (still) believe that in both academic research and education there is a need for change, *change*, quoting Obama, *we can believe in*.

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