The Individual And The Group In Console Gaming

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Computer-Supported Cooperative Work
Computer-Supported Cooperative Work

Contentious
Computer-Supported Cooperative Work
Competitive
Computer-Supported Cooperative Work

Image from hasbro.com & wimbledon.org
Image from brainygamer.com

Images from connecticon.org, areyougame.com, www.game-town.nl
[Adapted from Zagal et. al 2006, in *Simulation & Gaming*]
Competitive Games

Individual Interests

Cooperative Games

Mixed Interests

[Adapted from Zagal et. al 2006, in Simulation & Gaming]
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Although it’s a game that four players have to cooperate to solve puzzles, when you play it... you actually end up competing a lot more in that game than you do cooperating.

- Shigeru Miyamoto

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**Exploring Sociality in Gaming**

- Massively Multiplayer Online Games
  - Ducheneaut et al. [CHI 2006, JCSCW 2007...]
  - Nardi et al. [CSCW 2006...]
- Console and/or Physical Games
  - Voida & Greenberg [CHI 2009]
  - Sall & Grinter [JCSCW 2007]
- Handheld Games
  - Szentgyorgyi [CHI 2008]
# Methods

## Group Gameplay

## Focus group

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Emphasizing the Individual
* Talking Trash
* Falling Prey to the Computer’s Holding Power

Emphasizing the Group
* Constructing Shared Awareness
* Reinforcing Shared History
* Sharing in Success and Failure
* Engaging in Interdependence and Self-Sacrifice

Pivot Points
* Negotiating Individual Contributions to the Group
* Reviewing Scores

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* Negotiating Individual Contributions to the Group
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Emphasizing the Individual

Talking Trash

P2: I’m in first!
P3: Not for long!

P2 & P3
(Youth males, cousins)
Emphasizing the Individual
Talking Trash

P26 [Dad]: How about I do drums?
P24 [Son]: Fine, then I’ll do guitar.
P25 [Mom]: No, I’m doing guitar.
P24 [Son]: I’m gonna do guitar.
P25 [Mom]: No way, I’m doing guitar.
P24 [Son]: First one to touch it...

P24–P26
(An adult couple and their youth son)

Emphasizing the Individual
Falling Prey to the Computer’s Holding Power
Emphasizing the Individual

* Talking Trash
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Emphasizing the Group

Constructing Shared Awareness

P4 Wind... wind!
P5 And consider the downhill, though, so it’s probably pretty straight...
P4 The wind is going this way... so you want to go that way....
P5 That’s good.

P4, P5 & P6 (Youth males, friends)

Image from frequencycast.co.uk
Emphasizing the Group
Reinforcing Shared History

P5: Remember that time that you, like, just got mad and gave up trying...
P4: (Laughing)
Shot it back and forth for like half an hour?
P6: Yeah, that sucked!

P4, P5 & P6
(Youth males, friends)

Emphasizing the Group
Sharing in Success and Failure

P24 [Son]: We're going down!
P25 [Mom]: Who is?
P24 [Son]: We are...
P25 [Mom]: Going where?
P24 [Son]: ...as a band.
P25 [Mom]: Oh dear!

P24–P25
(Youth male & adult female, his mother)
Emphasizing the Group
Sharing in Success and Failure

Oh boy, we’re rusty, aren’t we?
We haven’t played in a while

P17
(Elder adult female, played with other gamers in her retirement community)

Emphasizing the Group
Engaging in Interdependence and Self-Sacrifice

P13: If you get enough star power, you can bring them back.

P14: You have to kind of plan ahead. If you know it’s going to be a hard song... and you know that maybe one of your friends is not going to make it, you’re actually probably not going to use it.

P13: Store it.

P14: You’re going to store it for, to save them, rather than to try to... boost your own life gauge.

P13 & P14
(Adult female & adult male, couple)
Emphasizing the Group
Engaging in Interdependence and Self-Sacrifice

P10: There are certain points where you do something and if the other person is way far behind...

P9: And, like, the things that we're doing were timed too.

P10: Yes. So you have to go quickly.

P9: ...but if you can't find the guy... can't jump high enough or can't fly—

P10: Drop out!

P9 & P10
(Adult female & adult male, couple)

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Emphasizing the Individual
* Talking Trash
* Falling Prey to the Computer’s Holding Power

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Pivot Points
* Negotiating Individual Contributions to the Group
* Reviewing Scores
Pivot Points
Negotiating Individual Contributions to the Group

P27: Bogus, we didn't get our first star...
P29: You should play the guitar.
P27: You know, a bass part is what you need.
P29: Should I switch it?
P27: Nah, you're good.
P29: No I'm not!

P27 & P29
(Adult female & mature adult female, her mother)

Pivot Points
Reviewing Scores

P24 [Son]: Yeah! Woohoo!
P25 [Mom]: We did it!
(scores displayed)
P26 [Dad]: I sucked.
P25 [Mom]: Maybe you shouldn't quit your job, dear.
P26 [Dad]: I only got fifty-two.

P24–P26
(Youth male playing with his adult parents)
Pivot Points
Negotiating Individual Contributions to the Group • Reviewing Scores

Images from the XBox 360 Guitar Hero manual & dreamyouralive’s Flickr photostream

Emphasizing the Individual
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Both group- and individual-oriented gaming practices were present in competitive, cooperative, and collaborative games, transcending the classic modes of gameplay with which they would most likely be associated.
Many Thanks

For More Information...

* The individual and the group in console gaming. *Proc. CSCW 2010*.

* Wii all play: The console game as a computational meeting place. *Proc. CHI 2009*.


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