Final Deliverable - Speculative Design Pictorial

Allie Vogel
MA HCI, 2021
alliemvogel@gmail.com

Ofek Salaama
MA HCI, 2021
Ofeksalama@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Work as a game relies on the notion that we are all players in the same game, striving to gain higher rank and achieve the highest possible score. We propose a new device to handle an enormous need in that game - the need to differentiate between our level as individuals which is best shown through the various levels in which society progresses. The clarity that individuals get to understand their position in this society is through a new type of vision, one that is embedded within the individuals as a new type of robotic implanted eye, that allows for both increased knowledge and vision.

Author Keywords

Tic Tac Toe; EOK - Eye of Knowledge; Rank; Gamification; Coins; Levels

CSS Concepts

• Computing methodologies ~ Artificial intelligence ~ Distributed artificial intelligence ~ Multi-agent systems

INTRODUCTION
BACKGROUND / MOTIVATION

Even before the epoch and ages, humanity used ranking to catalog and distinguish between populations and classes.

Back in the days of the ancient tribes, the Native Americans used feathers and distinguished costumes to emphasize the chief and the council of sages.

Also, dress found its place as a status symbol for certain ranks and prestige in the Middle Ages. Today, we also see considerable rankings in everything we see in front of us. Whether it's shoulder ranks in the military, digital job rankings in corporations like Microsoft, or even with our daily use of technology, like leaderboards within our activity tracking applications.

The need for separation has always existed and is expressed in various forms, but as such, it can also be deceived and simulated. For instance, people can fabricate their social ranking and status through various symbols such as expensive clothing or even high ranking scores in video games.

In our research, we propose to solve this problem while fully addressing the human need to distinguish between classes.

Using unique glasses that disrupt the vision according to your status will allow clear separation between populations. As a particular citizen progresses in the ranking of his work, his family and manages to go through stages in the game of life, his level will rise, and improvement in the sharpness of his vision will appear.

We offer a linear and straightforward world, where the high-ranking people will see each other clearly while the lower class will have to deal with blurred vision, which will incentivize them to move forward in stages.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The questions that guided us in this work are:

- What if all our work is an elaborate game?
- What if, in our society, we push this gaming strategy at work to the extreme?
- What if we are not playing the game at work, but the game of work is playing us?

We live in a world with classes and segregation between populations. Our research took the phenomenon to the extreme, comparing the world and classes to a game with stages and levels.

This study aims to reflect the reality in which we live in class contexts, population separation, alienation, and distance. Using a game analogy that makes this reality appear viable and normative. After all, it's just a game of life and within it, our labor.

RELATED WORK

STATUS SYMBOL

A status symbol has always been used as a tool to differentiate between populations in society. There are studies that argue that the usefulness of the concept of status itself in an urban environment should be questioned, as well as the so-called "drip effect" in fashion. They also claim that status symbols can be changed but never undone, and offer some hypotheses about the direction such symbols may take in the future. [3]

Another and more recent article argued that the pursuit of social status is a recurring and common challenge facing people in all human societies. However, the exact means by which people compete and actually acquire social status remain unclear.

The article suggests ways of coping but recognizes that they are not perfect and that a solution must be found to this issue. [10]

TECHNOLOGY - INSTANCE SEGMENTATION & AR

Instance segmentation is the task of detecting and delineating each distinct object of interest appearing in an image. This technology is used for many applications such as autonomous vehicles which typically use computer vision and instance segmentation for navigation, knowing where it is, or for producing a map of its environment and for detecting obstacles. [8]
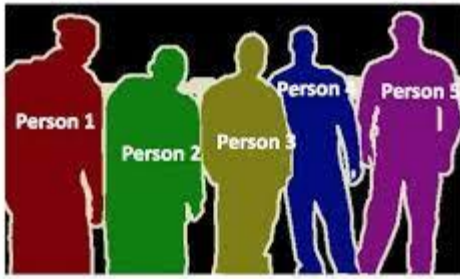

Figure 1. Instance Segmentation.

AR is a variation of Virtual Reality (VR), where virtual objects are superimposed on the real environment.

One of the main categories for its classification is using head mounted displays (HMD), wearable hardware, such as goggles or helmets. [5]

By using HMD users can see markers in the real scene. These markers will be identified by cameras and compared with patterns previously defined.

We propose to use this technology to detect people's rank, analyze their data and show it to the user in the form of a robotic (or cyborg) eye.

SPECULATIVE RESEARCH

Figure 2. Speculative research - mind mapping

Figure 3. New focus of robotic eye.

EXPLORATION THROUGH COLLAGE

Figure 4. The Game of Work Collage.

The main concern that led us was the perception of work as a game. In this game, the work simulates the playground, employees are players, and the coins or experience is a tool for progress in stages and ranks.

Through inspiration, we were able to discern the need of the population to differentiate between different rating ranks. We began to delve deeper and ask ourselves these deeper questions.
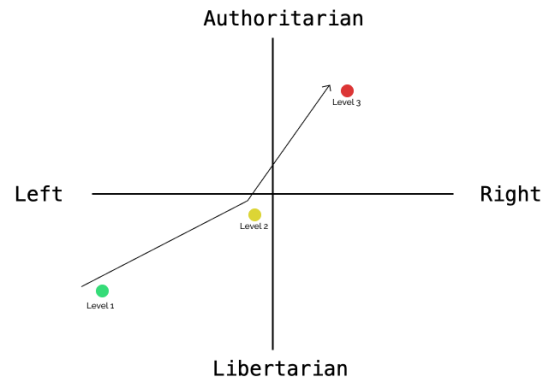
Figure 5. The political spectrum.

Our game society falls in the extreme left and middle of the libertarian section. We imagine our society as an extreme communist one which is a stark opposition to what we would imagine a traditional corporate capitalist society would look like, filled with promotions and up levelling.

We ask what does leveling up look like in a work environment that is communist and egalitarian?

Political the graph changes depending on the level -

Level 1: The society starts out left and liberatarian, every member of the society is equal and working towards the same goal, together, of upward trajectory. They support each other, working towards the common goal, with a strong community in mind.

Level 2: We start to see players in the society become increasingly more competitive towards one another. The graph starts to shift towards the center of the political spectrum. Each person is now starting to work for themselves and thinking about their individualism rather than the importance of community.

Level 3: At this stage, society is fully shifting into an authoritarian and right wing society, where the individuals with the highest score are starting to plague others with their dictatorial rules and absolute control of society. Increasingly we start to see the players fight one another to up-level. The communitarian nature of society starts is over. Chaos begins ensuing.

SPECULATIVE DESIGN PROPOSAL

The original idea for the speculative design proposal stemmed from a notion of a kibbutz-like, socialist society. In 'Level 1' of the society, everyone starts out as equals at work. As individuals move up the levels and start to gain consciousness, the differences in their productivity become more and more apparent and the 'players' of the game of work begin to take different roles according to their levels.
The idea of the differences started out as a game of Tic Tac Toe, where the players that won began to keep score until the algorithms began to take over, and the players themselves realize that they are no longer playing the game, but rather the game is playing them.

After we presented, we realized that this abstract game wasn't enough to exemplify the nuances in society and the level at which the players were rising through the level.
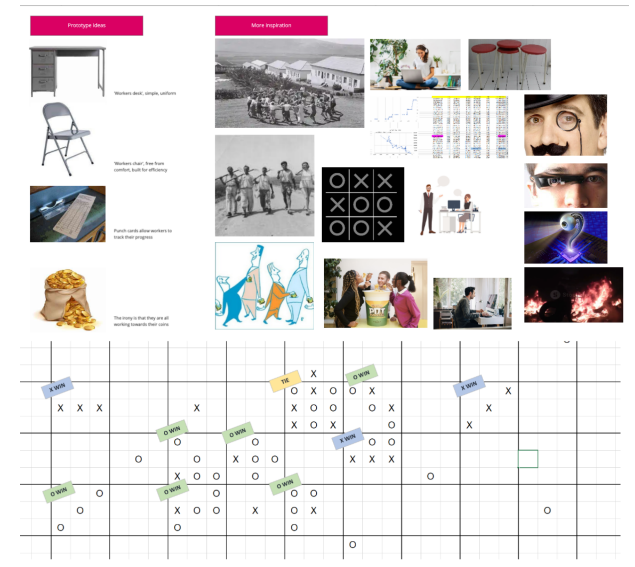

Figure 6. Inspiration and mood board.

After some reflection, we decided on a new focus for our speculative design proposal & diegetic prototype.
In our society, the players of the game of work will start to "see more clearly" as they rise up the levels within society. They will gain a deeper knowledge and understanding of their position in the game of work, and thus, this 'sight' will allow them to gain a more strategic place in society by 'leveling up' against their colleagues.

We imagine this to be some sort of robotic monocle or cyborg type of eye, one that allows for both increased knowing and vision. As the players gain more tokens within society, they also will begin to see more clearly, the vision of the individuals with the highest level as the clearest, while those at the bottom level having blurred vision. The differences in the levels are attributed to where each individual belongs within society.

Figure 7. Difference level of clarity and focus from a level 3 rank "Worker".

With the EOK device, users can always know who is standing in front of them/ and what the levels or the ranking are based on their clarity of vision:

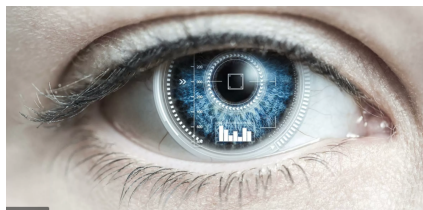Figure 8. Shot from Level 1 of the video

Figure 9. A closer look into the EOK of the players

In the video, we present our society within the realm of the three different levels. The narrator is an omni-present being that is describing the presented society.

Level 1 begins with all players equal: working together, helping each other, and playing together as they feel the good of the collective whole and fuel it with their unified spirit.

The next scene shifts into *Level 2*, as the players of the game start to become suspicious of one another and coins / gains are being distributed unequally among the different players. This is where we start to see a societal shift. Additionally we see the leader of the pack starting to gain consciousness of their position within the game of work, and thus of her position within society. This is where we begin to see the real differences in society. If we were to shoot the video again, this is where we would introduce our new diegetic prototype - the consciousness of the eye of knowledge - or *EOK*.

In *Level 3*, this is where we see the biggest and final shift within the game of work. Due to EOK, the leader of the pack has gained insight into her position and now is starting to distribute the coins and see very clearly their position within the game.

DISCUSSION

The significance of this work lies within the notion that work is a game and though we might think we are playing the game, due to societal constructs, it is the players that are being played by the game itself.

Individuals within a society believe that they have individual agency, when in fact, we are merely pawns within the game itself. We have a lot less agency than we'd like to believe. Our consciousness depends on our level, and as we rise up the ranks, our vision or perception of where society stands becomes more and more clear.

Our proposal pushes the idea of this type of gamified society to the extreme. As individual players begin to rise up the ranks, they gain more knowledge and consciousness of their position within society, specifically as they develop clarity within the *EOK*. As players go up in levels, the sharpness of the *EOK* lens goes into focus.

Our approach is to further develop the concept of the *EOK* and see how this gain of knowledge can affect the game of work. Additionally, we want to further explore what happens when we start to push the game of work to the extreme, and specifically how the consciousness developed by the *EOK* can shift society further.

The ethical problems that are presented is the shift from a society of equality to once controlled by those with more knowledge, or consciousness as they have a higher level in the game. It also shows and makes commentary on the effects of when a group of individuals recognize their position within the game of work and use it as a form of social control.

CONCLUSION

Work as a game is a commentary on the extremity in which society can go towards, when individuals start attributing their identity to their rank as they move up the levels. We started to push the boundaries of this society as players become mere pawns and inequality surges as the levels of the game change and the *EOK* enables focus of vision embedded within the players as they rise up the ranks and understand the depth of their placement within society.
We'd like to say this is a far stretch from current reality but this isn't an impossible society to imagine if you look at the course of human history and the formation of modern day capitalism.

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