PLAY-TO-LEARN

A dialogue between video games and social sciences

Game Design Symposium “Playing with stories that matter, How narration drives innovation in game design”

HEAD – GENÈVE (HES-SO), MA MEDIA DESIGN

ANTHONY MASURE, GUILLAUME HELLEU, THIBÉRY MAILLARD

Abstract

“Play-to-Learn” project aims to merge the cultures of the social sciences and video games. The project takes the form of an interactive audiovisual program available in a variety of formats and distribution platforms, depending on the target audience. Each episode (live streamed) invites a researcher to explore a game with a specialist in the field. This unique interview system explores the major themes linking gaming and the social sciences. It is augmented, before and after the broadcasts, by various social media to activate and federate a community.

01

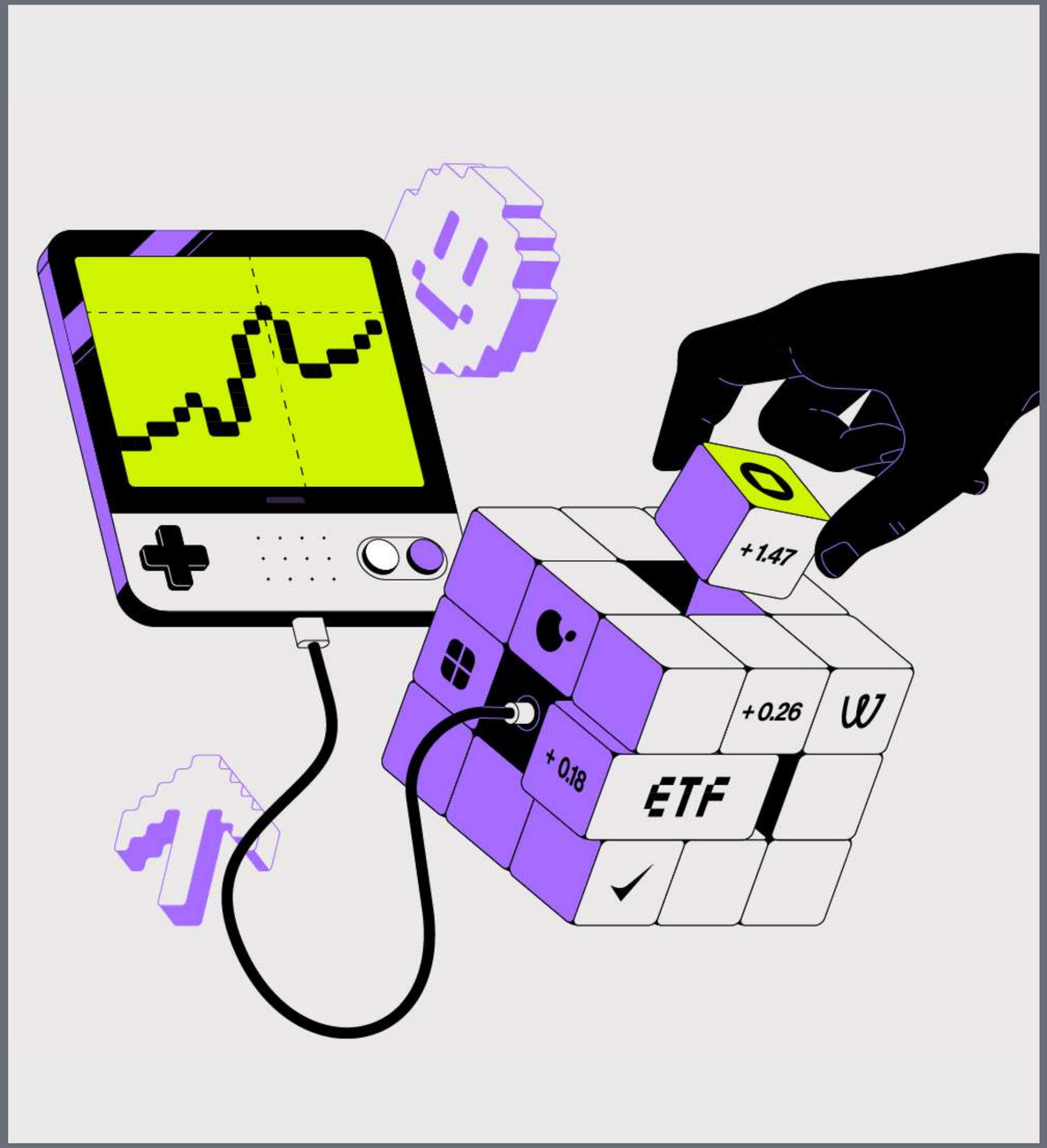
CONTEXT

Funding context

Project financed by the Gebert Rüf Foundation (call Scientainement), September 2023 – April 2025.

Partners

– GIFF Festival (Geneva)
– Hiflow (Plan-les-Ouates)
– Université de Lorraine
– Ican (Paris)
– Fondation Plaza (Geneva)
– Perfect Memory (France)



02

TEAM

HEAD – GENÈVE (HES-SO), MA MEDIA DESIGN

ANTHONY MASURE, GUILLAUME HELLEU, THIBÉRY MAILLARD

Anthony Masure

Anthony Masure is an Associate Professor and Dean of Research at Geneva University of Art and Design (HEAD – Genève, HES-SO). His research is currently focused upon the impact that artificial intelligence and blockchain technologies have upon design.

Guillaume Helleu

Guillaume Helleu is a Web3 protocol designer and co-founder of the Hint3rland studio (2022). Trained as an architect and currently a research associate at HEAD – Genève, he has been analyzing the socio-political and economic aspects of blockchain technologies, and more recently artificial intelligences, since 2017.

Thibéry Maillard

Thibéry Maillard is a web designer, graphic facilitator and teacher. With a scientific background, he specializes in graphic interface design and live sketching. He holds a research Master’s degree in art and design, and teaches in graphic design and JV schools, as well as in continuing education.

Photo : Michel Balmont

03

VIDEO GAMES IS THE MAIN CULTURAL MEDIUM

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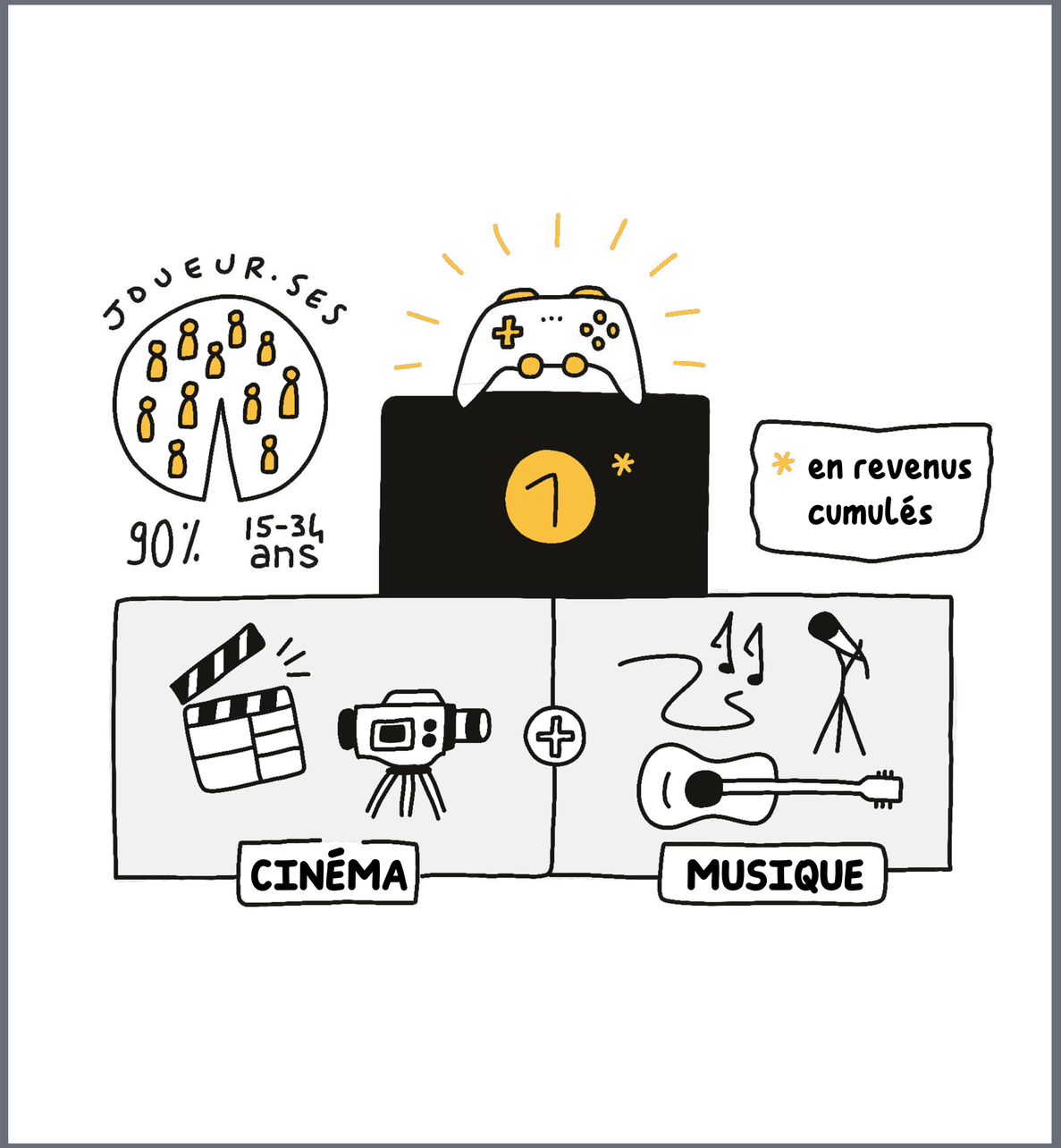
ANTHONY MASURE, GUILLAUME HELLEU, THIBÉRY MAILLARD

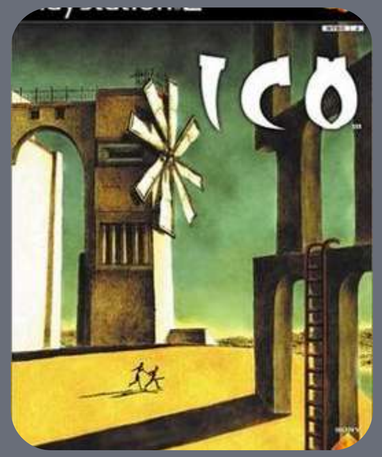
The power of video games

Video games offer a playful and immersive approach to a wide range of themes (ecology, death, love, etc.) that overlap with those of human and social sciences.



DISCOVERY TOUR
BY UBISOFT
ANCIENT GREECE

AdVenture
COMMUNIST


ICO

florence
an interactive story
about love and life

LIE IN MY HEART
An expressive game

SIGMA THEORY
GLOBAL COLD WAR

BLANC

theme HOSPITAL
VILLFROG

04

VIDEO GAMES, LIVE STREAMING AND ENTERTAINMENT

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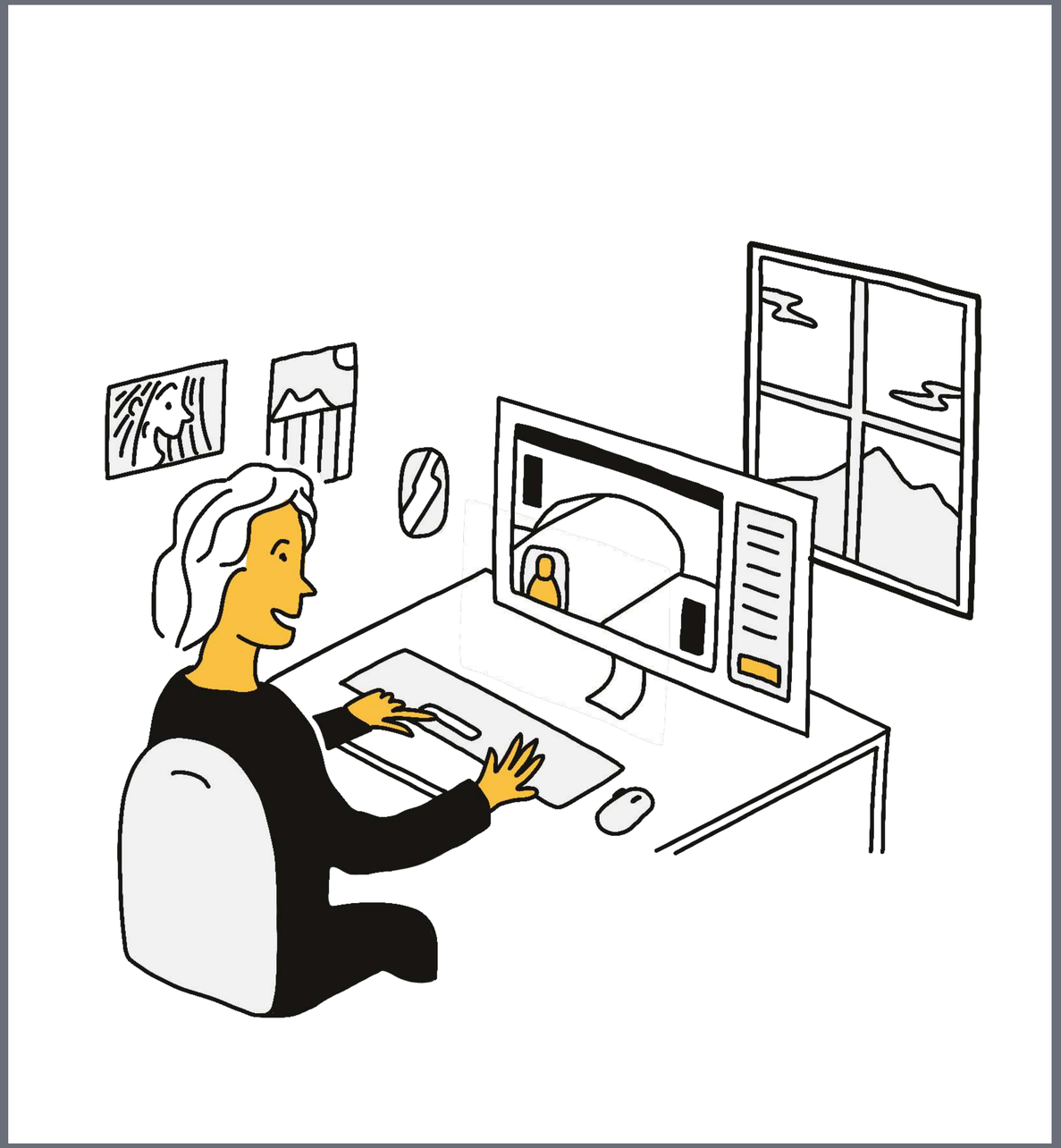
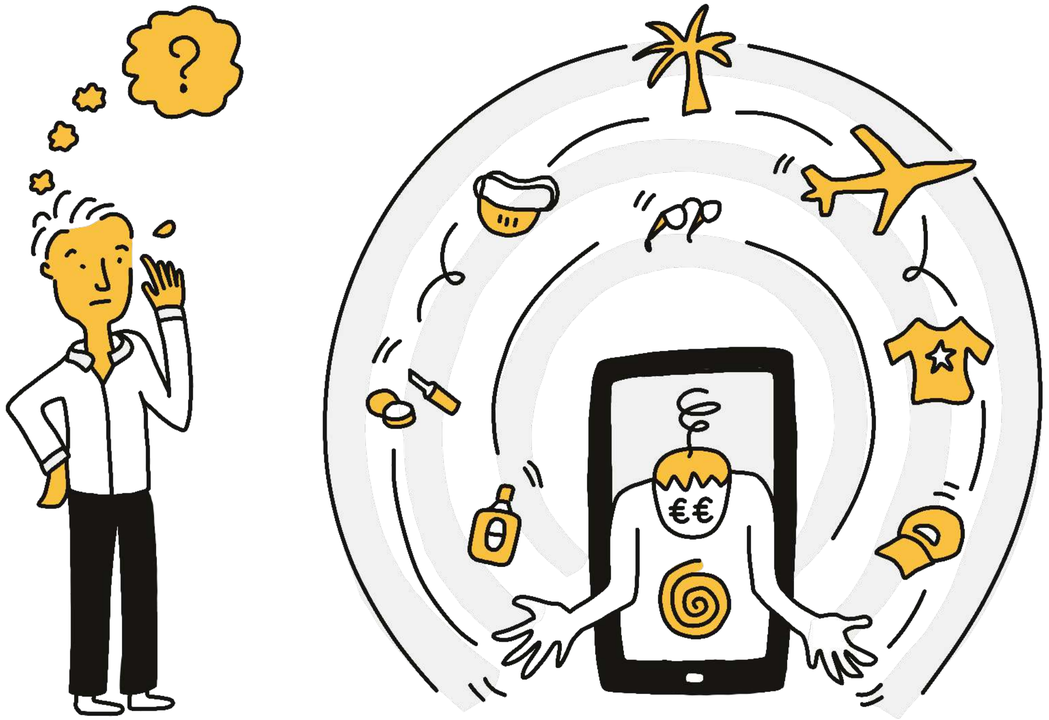
Broadcast video games

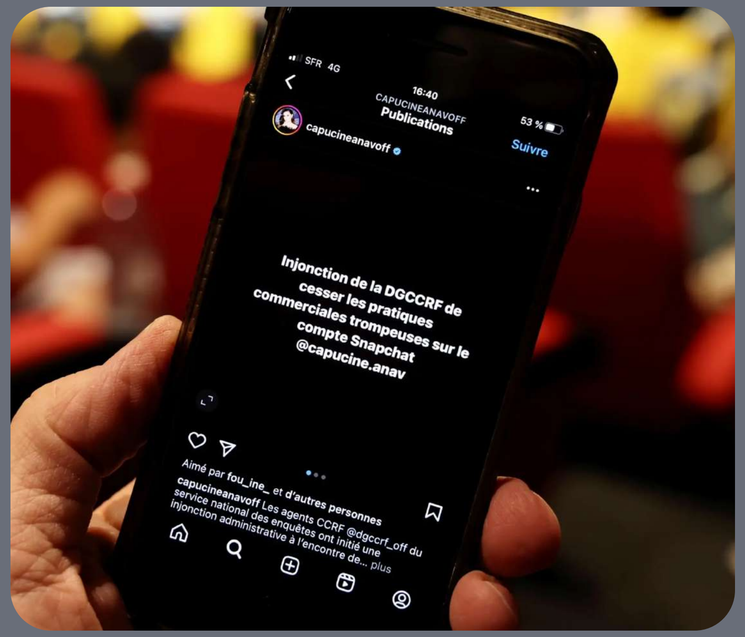
Video games are also watched online, and generate very high audiences among 15-34 year-olds (e.g. on Twitch), mostly by using TV codes and adding an interactive layer to create engagement.



Social media and attention-grabbing

More broadly speaking, audiovisual social media (YouTube TikTok, etc.), while enabling to address a wide audience, often have the downside of focusing attention for commercial purposes and limiting our ability to think.




SFR 4G
16:40
CAPUCINEANAVOFF
Publications
53 %
capucineanavoff
Suivre
Injonction de la DGCCRF de cesser les pratiques commerciales trompeuses sur le compte Snapchat @capucine.anav
Aimé par fou_ine_ et d'autres personnes
capucineanavoff Les agents CCRF @dgccrf_off du service national des enquêtes ont initié une injonction administrative à l'encontre de... plus

アレクシス うち(Alexis dehors)
@Xenoxx_off
#CeSoirChezBaba moi je croix a une théorie ou la Chine aurait voulu baisser le taux de natalité après la loi des deux enfants #hanouna
20h49
TOUCHE PAS
TPMP!
À MON POSTE !
Benjamin Castaldi
Bernard MONTIEL
RAYMOND
Eric Naulleau
LA THÉORIE DU COMPLOT

you're one of the 10.000 lucky people who'll get an iPhone 15 Pro for just $2.
MrBeast

KYLIE
304M
Followers
Instagram
KHLOE
215M
Followers
Instagram
KIM
281 M
Followers
Instagram
KOURTNEY
160M
Followers
Instagram
215M
Followers
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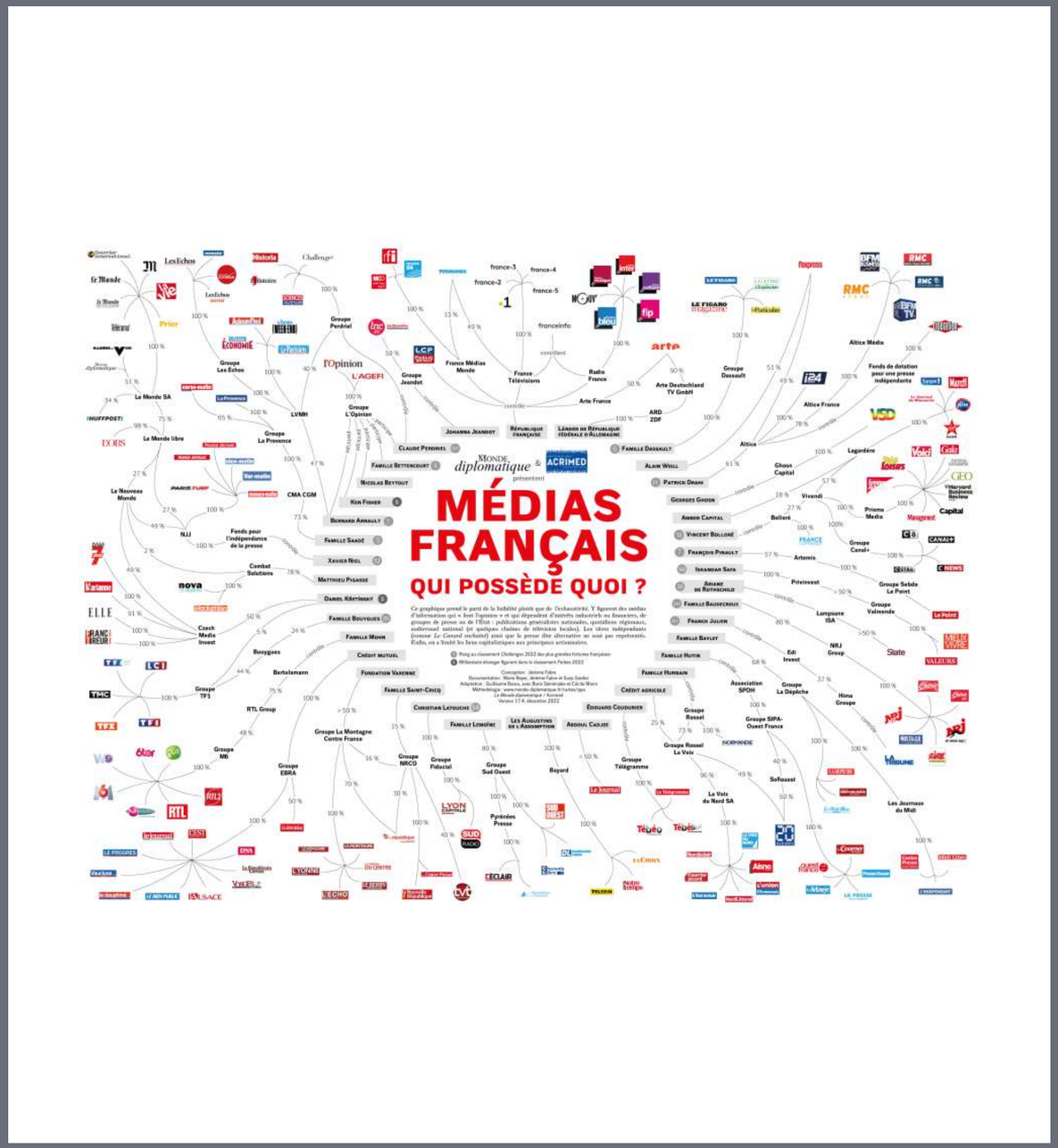
Mistrust of the media

The economic concentration of the major media (eg. in France) and their dependence on the advertising system is leading to a loss of confidence in their freedom of speech.



05

MEDIATION OF ACADEMICS

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ANTHONY MASURE, GUILLAUME HELLEU, THIBÉRY MAILLARD

Practice mismatch

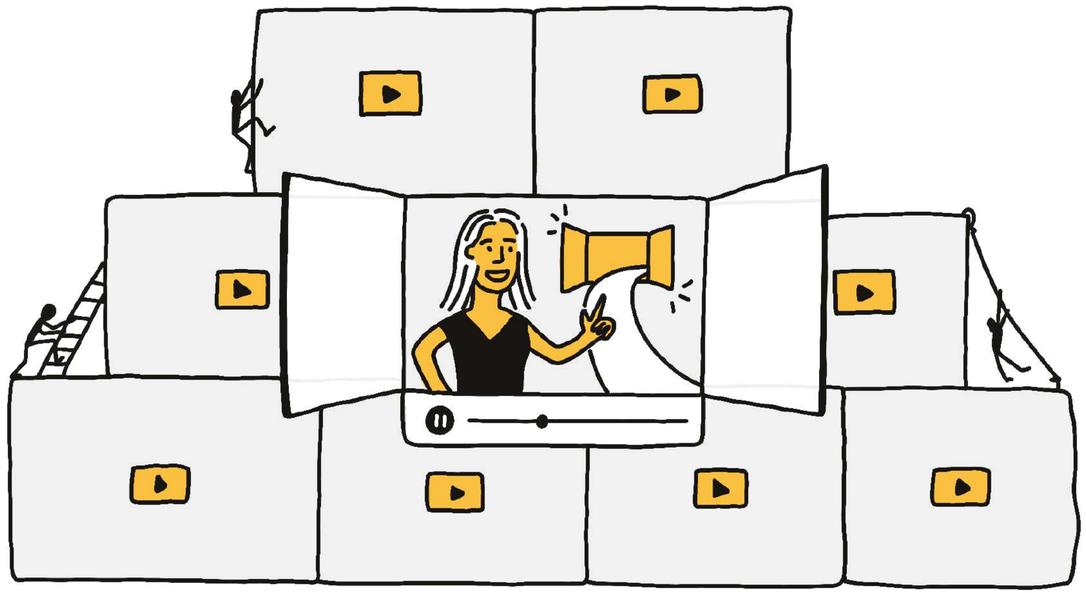
Research in the humanities and social sciences deals with the complexity of the world over a long period of time, which is incompatible with that of the mass media.

Social science formats

Academic communication methods (symposia, journals, etc.) are too far from digital practices and from the younger generation.

Video as scientific mediation

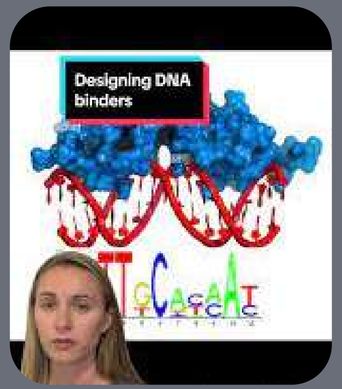
To bring the social sciences closer to the general public, YouTube channels are renewing scientific communication and desacralizing academic knowledge.



Manon Bril

Sciences de comptoir

Angle droit



Julia Bauman

David Louapre

Listing case studies

Aa Name	Créateur	# Date	Thèmes	Format	Diffusion	Financement	Lien ur
MelissaInDeNil			Archéologie, Egyptologie	**Twitch** : Live les mardi, jeudi et samedi à partir de 19h30. L	Twitch YouTube Tik Tok	Subs & Bits	Twitch - T
DrMick	Ryan Mick	2018	Psychologie	Session de jeux en live, où il s'appuie sur le chat pour analy	Twitch YouTube Tik Tok	Subs & Bits, vente de merch e	Twitch - Y
RockitSage		2015	Géologie	Discussion et partage autour de la géologie, gaming	Twitch	Subs & bits	Twitch
Paleontologizing	Danny Anduza		Paléontologie	Live quotidiens de 14h à 18H. Interviews d'autres paléonto	Twitch	Patreon et Ko-fi (+subs & bits	Twitch
DasValdez		2014	Aérospatial	Live jeux-vidéos autour de l'aérospatial et discussions, sort	Twitch YouTube	Affilié à NASASpaceflight LLC	Twitch - Y
Dr Youngs Lab	Jamie Young	2020	Chimie	Live 2 x par semaine. **Basics of Chemistry** : cours d'introdu	Twitch	partenaire The Knowledge Fel	Twitch
ProfMelko	Joshua Melko	2017	Physique-Chimie	Diffusion de cours en live, d'expériences et de discussion a	Twitch YouTube	partenaire The Knowledge Fel	Twitch - Y
Underscore	Micode		Hacking, Dev, IA, Entrepren		Twitch YouTube		Youtube
Athéna Sol	Athéna Sol		Féminisme, LGBT, langue fr	« Des charos et des lettres »	Tik Tok Instagram		TikTok
ShaneMcInnis							
Professor EXP	Garry David	2018	Sociologie	Live discussion avec le chat, de concept sociologique revie	Twitch	partenaire The Knowledge Fel	Twitch
As a scientist Gaming	Ken Hanson		Physique, mathématiques	Gameplay bimensuel avec invité	Twitch	partenaire The Knowledge Fel	Twitch
Squadracer		2022	Code	Lundi : codage de side-projects | Mardi : discussion actu de	Twitch YouTube	partenaire Mouvement Impact	Twitch
Humanities at Play	Kathleen Kuo	2023	SHS	live 2x par semaine, gameplay avec un invité, puis discussio	Twitch YouTube	financé par Nevada Humanitie	Twitch - Y
Great Books Prof	Andrew Moore	2020	Philosophie & Littérature	**Youtube** :format intermédiaire (10-20mn) Revue de livres e	YouTube Tik Tok	Relié à St Thomas University	Youtube -
Philo-Notes		2010	Philosophie	vidéos très courtes (2mn) avec une explication illustrée sur	YouTube Site dédié	?	Youtube -
Lex Fridman Podcast	Lex Fridman	2006	Général	épisode de 1H à 3h, Fridman et l'invité discutent d'un cham	YouTube	Vidéos sponsorisées par marc	Youtube

Study conducted by Lison Grézaud

06

IMITATING OR GOING BEYOND TV CODES?

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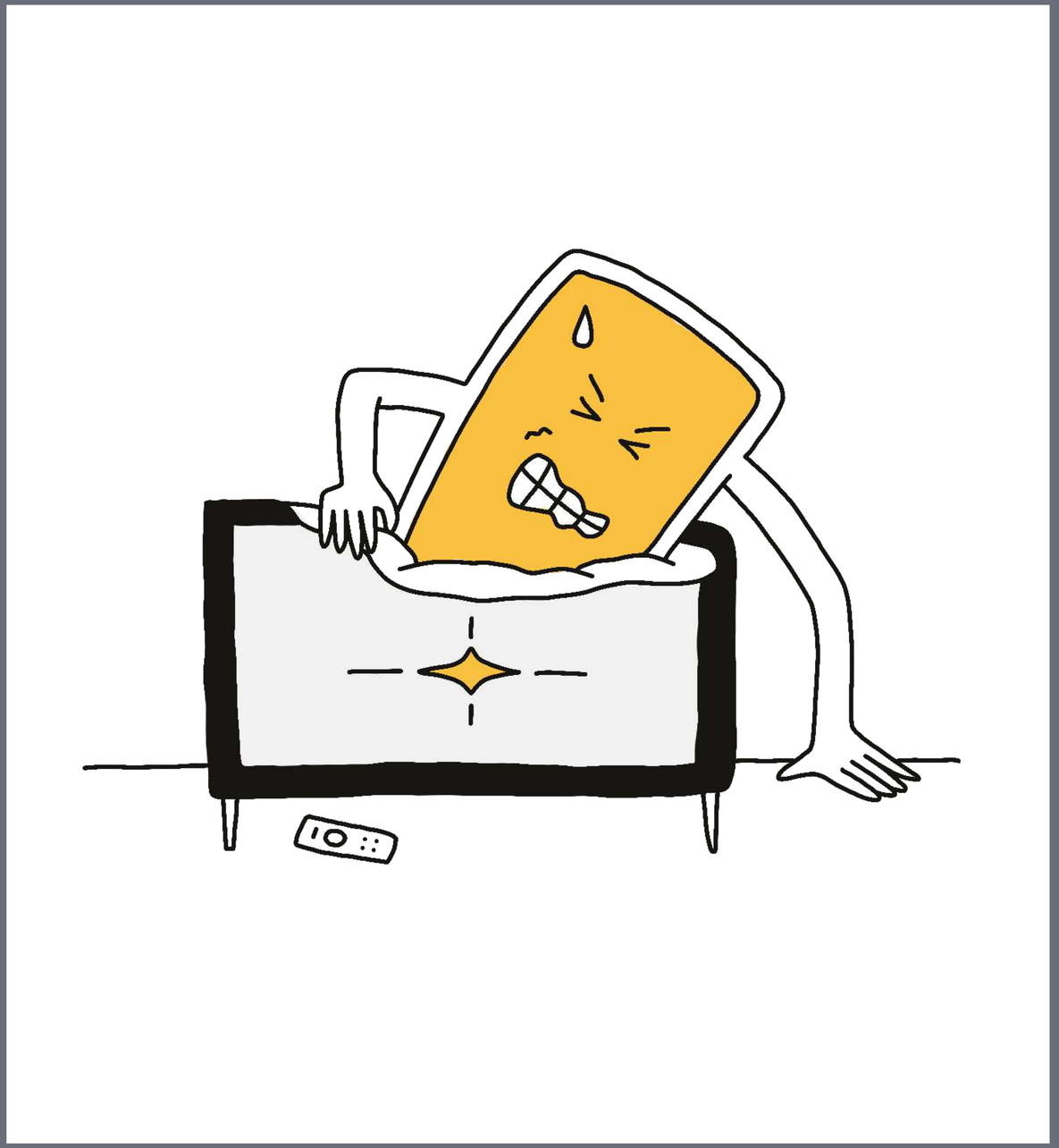
ANTHONY MASURE, GUILLAUME HELLEU, THIBÉRY MAILLARD

Video games and audiovisual codes

YouTube and Twitch (for the most part) adopt audiovisual codes without fully exploiting the interactive potential (and therefore the audience) of video games. So how can we create a real dialogue between video game audiences and the social sciences?



A new way of talking about video games

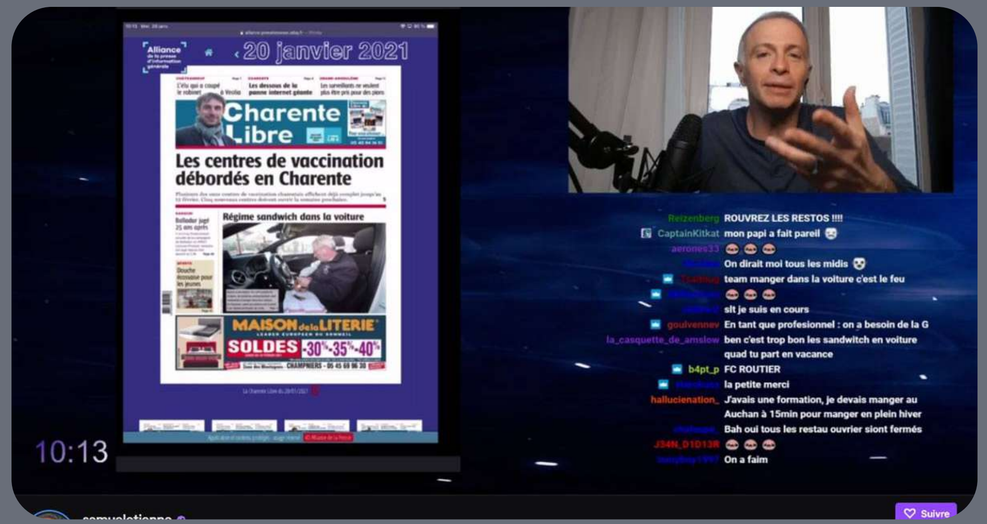
→ *Modiiie*

→ *Joueur du Grenier*

→ *Dany et Raz*

ANTHONY MASURE, GUILLAUME HELLEU, THIBÉRY MAILLARD

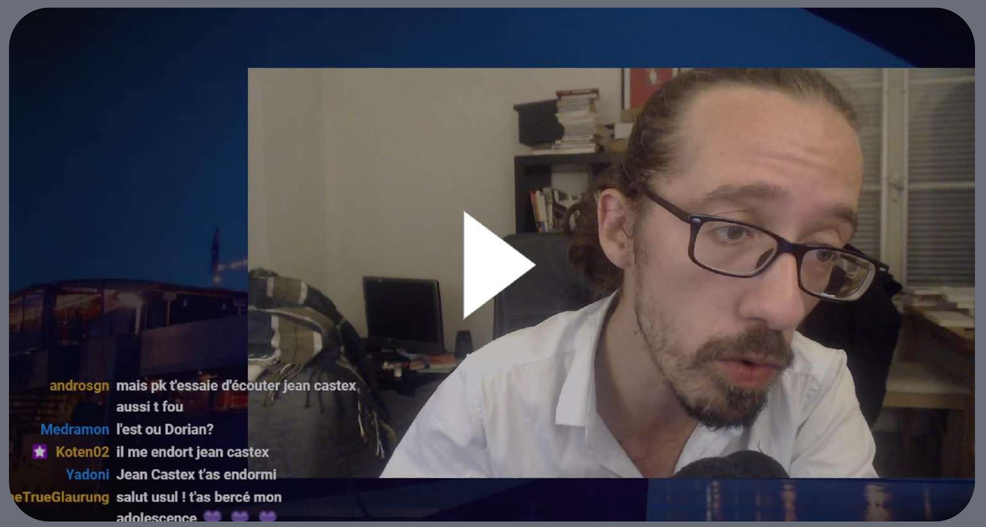
Twitch beyond video games



Samuel Etienne

Fibre Tigre, Game of Roles

Backseat



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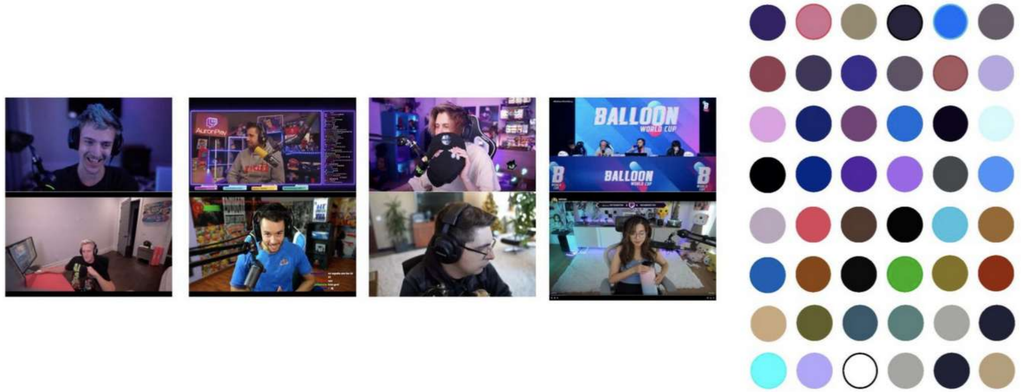
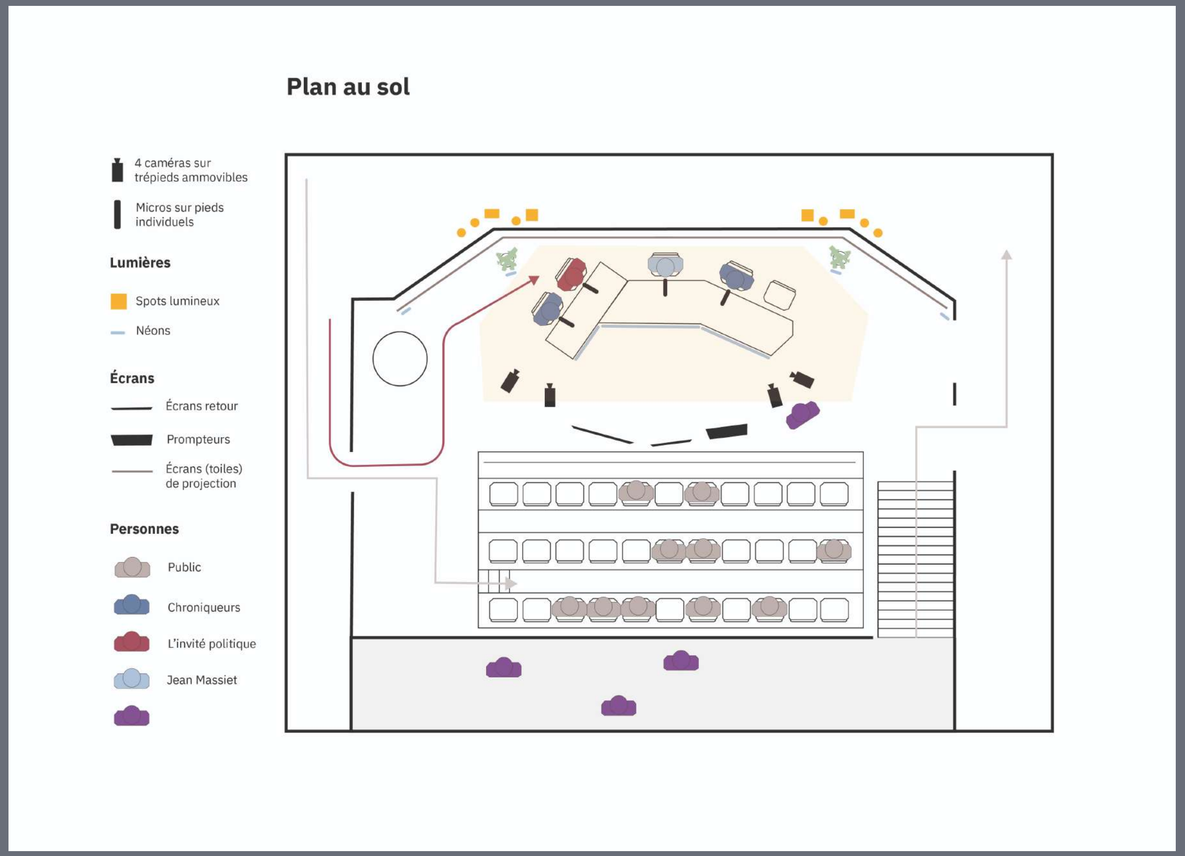
Social media spaces

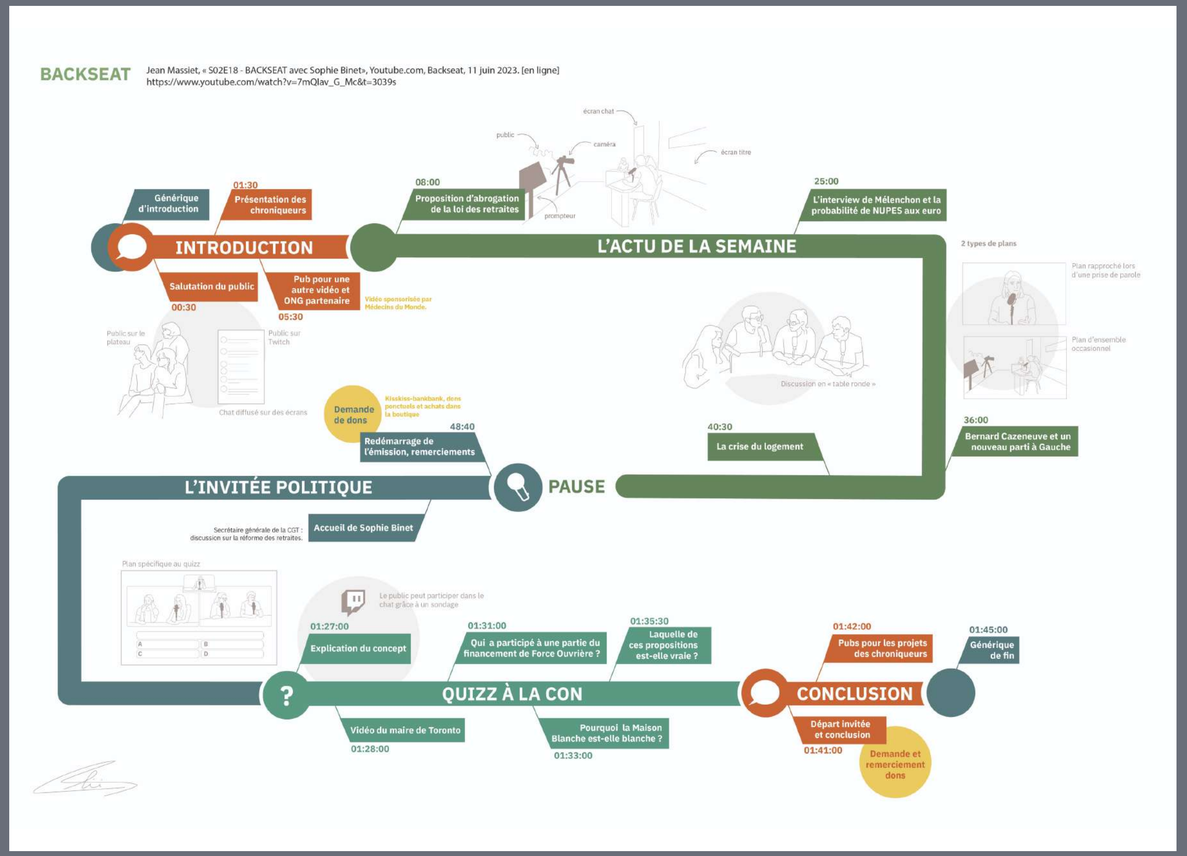
Bachelor’s course in Interior Architecture, HEAD – Genève, 2022-2023



Color analysis in Twitch
Noémie Castella, Charlène Claveria, Lisa Divorne

Studying spaces and timeline





Study of existing facilities by Lison Grézaud

07

PLAY-TO-LEARN: OBJECTIVES AND MILESTONES

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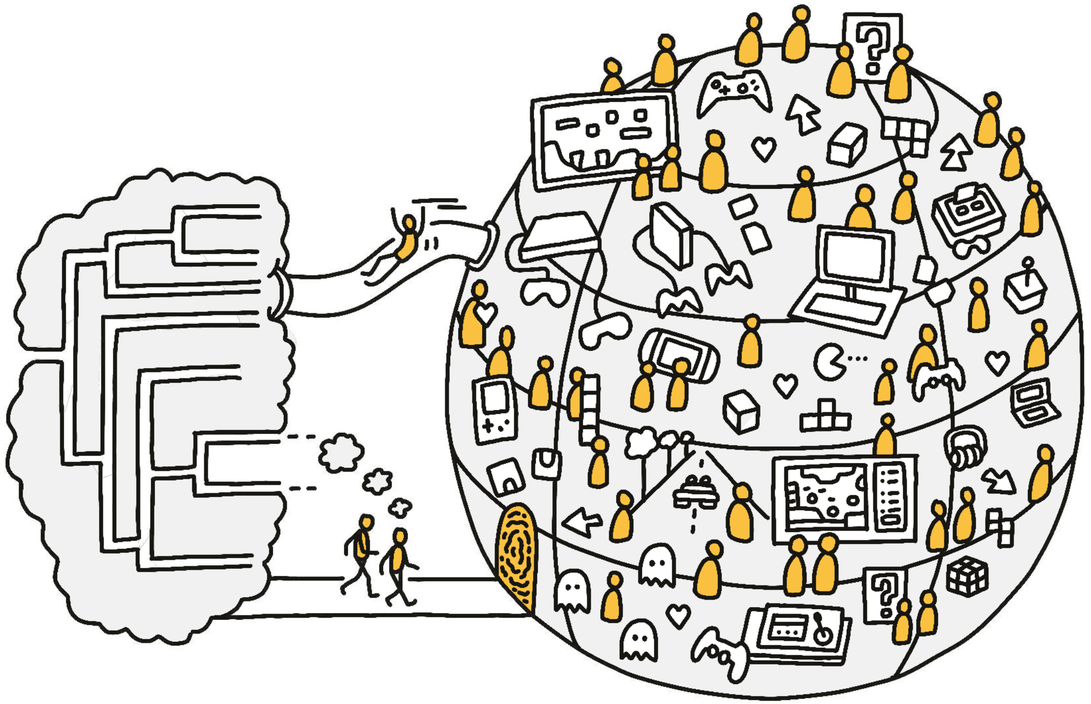
Goals

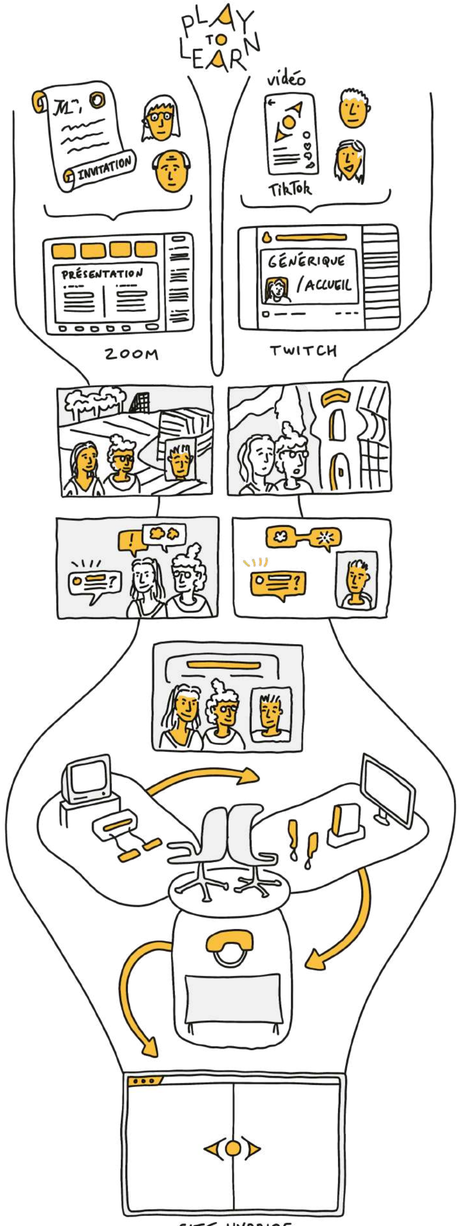
→ Use video game codes and media to broaden the social science audience.

→ Get researchers interested in game design through the practice of video games.



Concept (WIP)

- → Film a researcher playing (filmed ITW)
- → JV and SHS specialists on the same level
- → Scenography with several screens and game excerpts
- → Two parallel streams (Zoom and Twitch) for two audiences
- → Interfaces and hybridization moments



Food for thought

Tags	Type	Name	Auteur·rice	Edition/diffusion	Date
JV Philosophie SHS	Livre	Petite philosophie du jeu vidéo	Matthieu Triclot	La Découverte	2011
JV	Podcast	Quête latérale	Qualiter	Acast	2020
SHS Communauté Blockchain Technologie	Article	Building a Scientific Community on the Blockchain	Jorge Sandoval	Common place	2022
SHS Media Technologie	Article	From healthy communities to toxic debates: Disqus' changing ideas about comment moderation	Anne Helmond	Tandfonline	2022
SHS Science	Podcast	Les p'tits bâteaux	Noëlle Bréham	France Inter (Radio France)	2022
SHS Philosophie Edu	Livre	Une société sans école	Ivan Illich	Seuil	1971
Media Technologie	Livre	Médiarchie	Yves Citton	Seuil	2017
SHS Philosophie Edu	Livre	Paulo Freire, pédagogue des opprimé-e-s	Irène Pereira	Libertalia	2018
JV	Livre	Homo ludens	Johan Huizinga	Gallimard	1951
JV	Livre	Unit Operations: An Approa OUVRIR Videogame Criticism	Ian Bogost	The MIT Press	2006

08

CONCLUSION