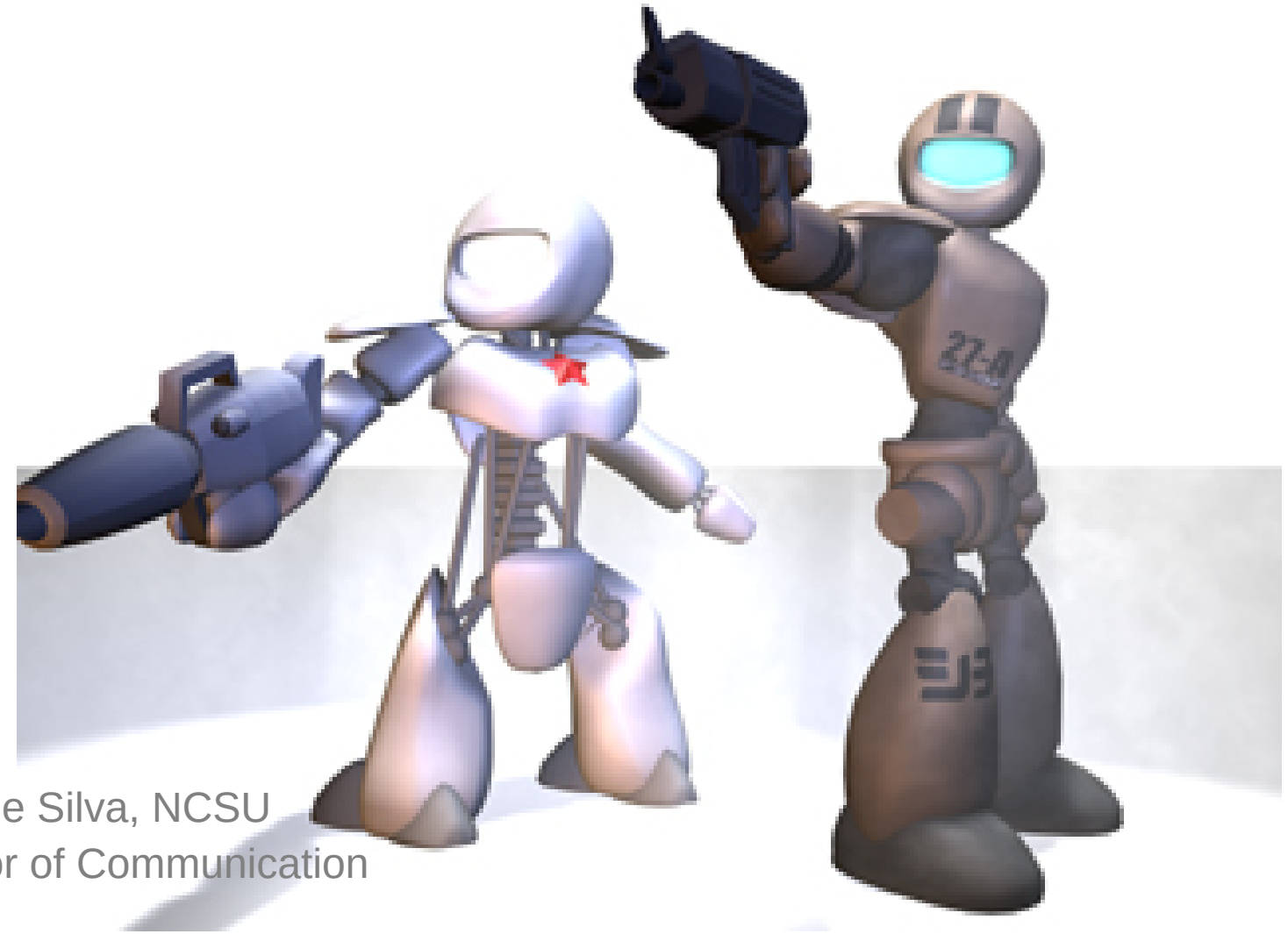
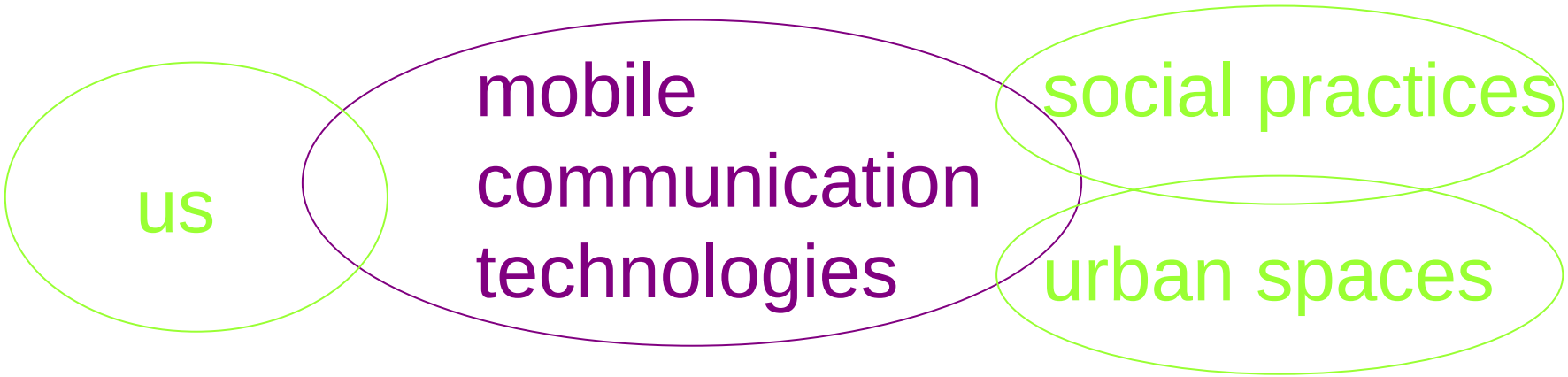
Hybrid Reality Games

New perspectives on mobile gaming



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Location-based mobile games

What is a mobile game?

- Games played on cell phone / mobile devices screens
- Single player games







What is a location-based/ hybrid reality game?

-Mobile games

-Use cell phones, GPS devices and wireless networks as game interfaces

- Use the city as the game board/screen

- multiuser games





MMORPG played in physical spaces



GAME SPACE

computer screen

physical space

Hybrid Reality Games

Examples

Botfighters, It’s Alive (2001, Sweden) | http://www.botfighters.com



- Widen the game environment
- The player is the avatar
- Physical space becomes the game board
- No gameplay (in-between)

Change the perception of the city

Taxi 31: has four phones, bills ups to $4,000, and brags on the website that he’s driven 30 kilometers outside the city to get in battles. Wired News, 02.08.2002

Players: 25 – 35

Sweden / Finland / Ireland / Russia



Mogi Mogi, Newt Games (2004, Japan) | http://www.mogimogi.com



Photos: Paul Baron

“The game provides a data-layer over the city of Tokyo. As you move through the city, if you check a map on your mobile phone screen, you'll see nearby items you can pick up and nearby players you can meet or trade with.” The Feature, 2004

Potential uses / future perspectives for hybrid reality games

Education

Frequency 1550, Waag Society (Netherlands, 2005)

http://www.waag.org/freq1550







Location-based mobile game + educational content

Test: February 7-9, 2005

Narrative to teach students the history of Medieval Amsterdam

Tourism


infosyncworld.com


405
170
5
210
ALTADENA
BURBANK
2
101
GLENDALE
PASADENA
Topanga State Park
101
SOUTH PASADENA
WEST HOLLYWOOD
EL MONTE
L O S A N G E L E S
10
1
SANTA MONICA
10
EAST LOS ANGELES
60
CULVER CITY
110
605
Los Angeles International Airport
FLORENCE
INGLEWOOD
SOUTH WHITTIER
Santa Monica Bay
105
LYNWOOD
Manhattan Beach
HAWTHORNE
PARAMOUNT
5
GARDENA
91
Redondo Beach
710
LAKEWOOD
TORRANCE
WEST CARSON
CYPRESS
405
1
Long Beach
RANCHO PALOS VERDES
GARDEN GROVE
PACIFIC OCEAN
San Pedro Bay
Seal Beach

European Commission Directorate-General Information Society (2002)

- casual gamers will constitute the majority of the mobile game population

- the most popular games will most likely be based on gameplay rather than on graphics

- They will also incorporate the true nature of the mobile phones: **communication and location**

Why transfer traditional PC games to the mobile phone?

Research questions:

- How to re-conceptualize games when the interface for gameplay changes?
- How to look at cell phones are more than mobile telephones?
- How games (via mobile technologies) might change our experience of (urban) spaces

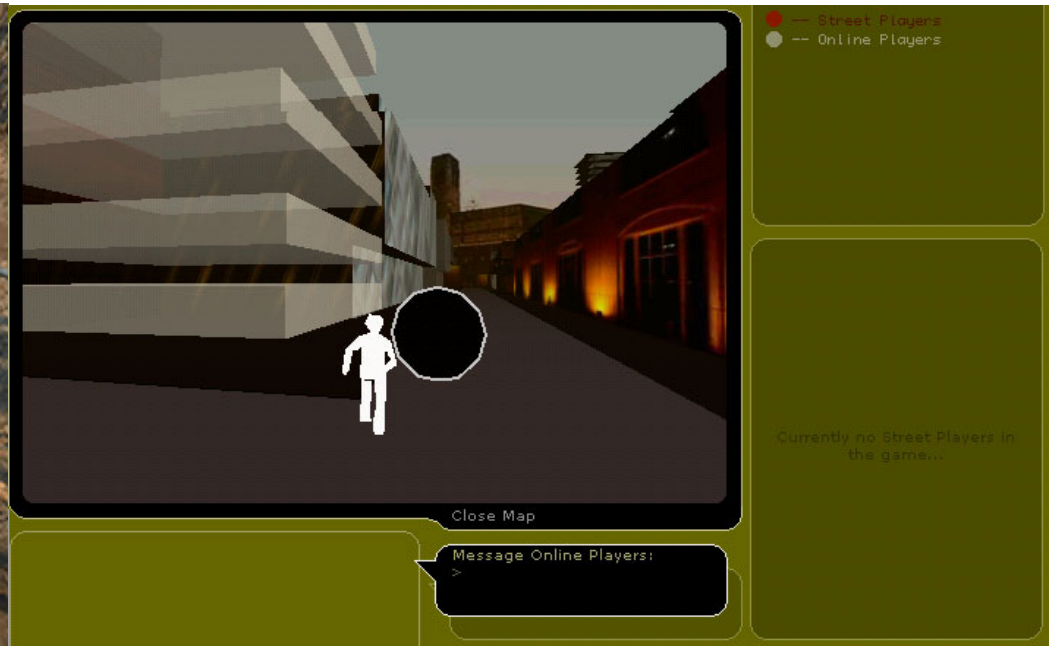
Alien Revolt, 2005: Brazilian first location-based mobile game | www.alienrevolt.com





Blast Theory + Mixed Reality Lab





Uncle Roy All Around You

http://www.uncleroyallaroundyou.co.uk/

Westminster, London (UK), 2003

Manchester (UK), 04.28 - 5.08.2004

West Bromwich (UK), 05.27 – 06.05.2004

Digital Graffito (Germany, Siemens + Ars Electronica Center, 2007)



Virtual post-its: attaching SMS messages to geographical points in space.

Mobile games vs. Hybrid Reality games

- Mobile phones are always with the user
- Ubiquitous interfaces
- Transferring PC games to mobile phones?

- Use of location awareness and multiuser features

Spaces for the projection of the imagination

Internet:

space for projection of the imagination (1990s) - MUDs



mobility



Urban spaces:

new spaces for the projection of the imagination (games)

Relevance of mobile technologies:

- Changing our perception of space
- Re-defining social networks
- Changing the definition of games

Create content for location-based games:

- Community formation
- New forms of narratives in urban spaces
- New applications: education, knowledge, creativity

Traveling, shopping and playing games: trips to the unknown?

Tourism

Shopping

- Leisure and pleasurable experiences.
- Take place outside the spheres of home and work.
- Some kind of controlled adventure





Turo-Kimmo Lehtonen, Pasi Mäenpää, 1997

Traveling, shopping and playing games: trips to the unknown?

Tourism

- Really goes somewhere else

Shopping

- Transforms the familiar into strange.
- Look into the same environment with the eyes of a tourist.
- The real world is constantly challenged by the possible world

Traveling, shopping and playing games: trips to the unknown?

Tourism Shopping Play

- Central aspect: experience of movement.
- Special relationship with the environment (mix imagination and reality)
- Take place in public spaces

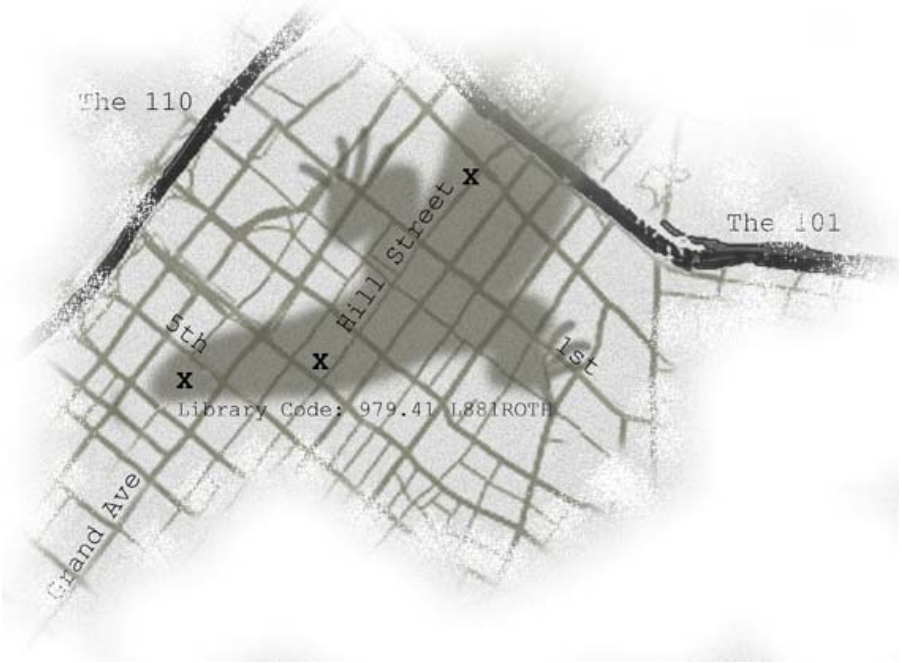
Why Sweden?

- Considered the world's most advanced information economy
- SMS was very popular already in 2001.
- High mobile penetration rate: more than 100% (2004)
- Mobile phones are already community forming devices



Change the perception of physical spaces.

Use physical space as the game board.



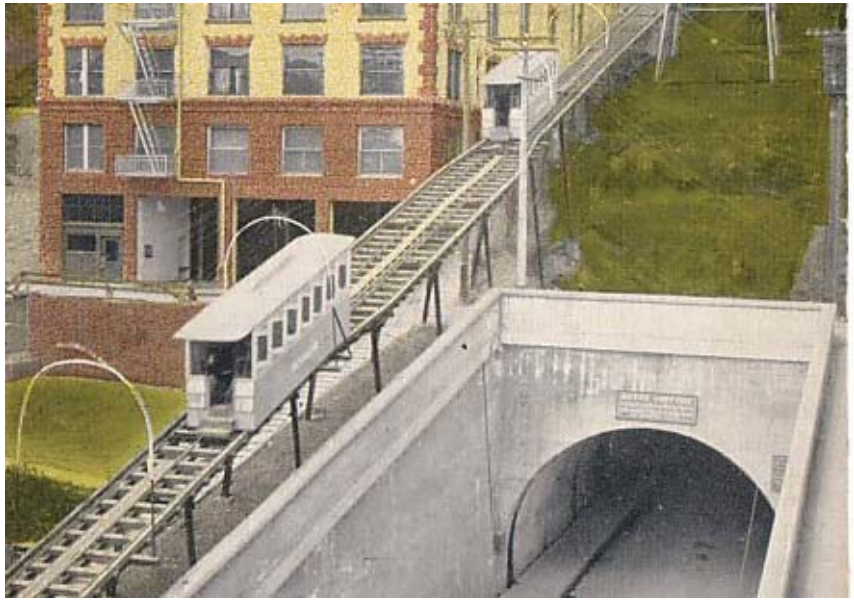
Geocaching (2000)

http://www.geocaching.com



Tracking Agama (2004)

http://www.trackingagama.net



Mobile player vs. PC player

- Current non-gamers
- Play “in-between” activities.
- Games will most likely be based on gameplay rather than on graphics.

- Solution? Use phone specific features, such as mobile positioning.

European Commission Directorate-General Information Society (2002), research report.

Hybrid reality games

- Are part of life
- Mix real and imaginary spaces
- Turn the familiar into strange
- Allow people to withdraw from the everyday spaces of their serious lives and “travel” to new, unpredictable, and unexplored spaces.

BOTFIGHTERS
IT'S ALIVE! PRODUCTION

CLOSE

HOME | SETTINGS | HIGH SCORE | BOT-NET | MISSION | BOT LAB | MY ROBOT | HELP

BODY | SHIELD | WEAPON | BATTERY | RADAR | EYES

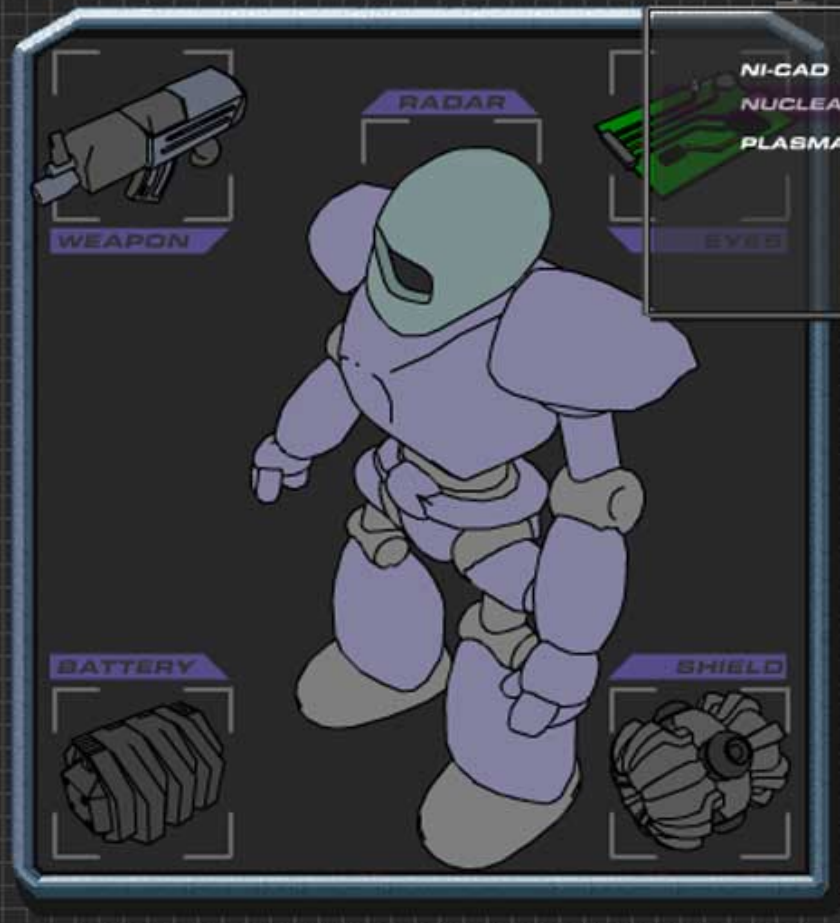
SELE



BODY STILL CAPTURE

INSTALLED COMPONENT:

INFO:
Click on the image of your robot body above, or on any of the five boxes with your installed robot components, to read more information about them.



NI-CAD
NUCLEAR
PLASMA

BOTLAB 1.1

SELECTED COMPONENT:



COMPONENT INFO:

INFO:
If you don't mind tearing down buildings that happen to be close to your opponents, this is the weapon for you. It requires a large robot body.

Weight: 120 kg
Price: 4'000

NOTE! IF COMPONENTS DON'T "STICK" IT MEANS THAT YOU CAN'T AFFORD IT, OR ARE TOO HEAVILY LOADED.

NAME: DemoBot | ROBUCKS: 2695 | WEIGHT (NOW/MAX): 45/115 | COST:0 | RESET | SAVE

Game

Established inside a set of rules

Based on winning and loosing

Play

Rules and margins are more loose or inexistent (RPGs / MUDs / hybrid reality games)

Roger Calois, *Les Jeux and Les Homes,* 1958

Järvinen, Heliö, Mäyrä, 2002

MUDs challenge the traditional game definition!

No winners or loosers | Mix into life

“More than 40% of the players in the massively multiplayer game (MMORPG) EverQuest play 20 to 40 hours a week.”

Boston Globe, 08/05/2002

