

# Player Types: A Meta-Synthesis

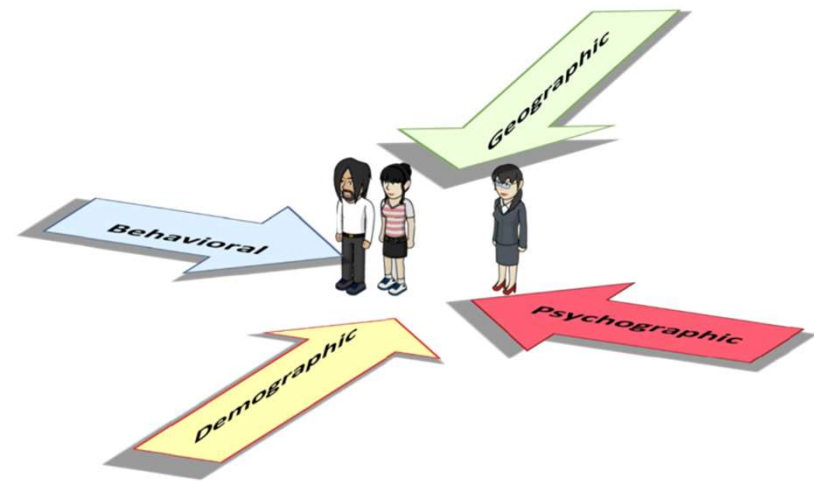
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Part 1

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# Market Segmentation

- Divide market to better meet demand
  - Geographic segmentation
  - Demographic segmentation
  - Psychographic segmentation
  - Behavioural segmentation



# Studies Analysed

Author(s)	Year	Basis	Methods	Presented player types	Games in the study
Wang Chang	2004	Psychographic	Quantitative – factor analyses	Single-oriented player, Community-oriented player, Off-real world player	Lineage (MMO)
Tsang	2010	Psychographic	Quantitative – factor analyses	Aggressive gamer, Social gamer, Inactive gamer	Online games in general
Yee	2006, 2007, 2012	Psychographic	Quantitative – factor analyses	Achievement, Social, Immersion (+subconstructs)	EverQuest, Dark Age of Camelot, Likima Online, and Star Wars Galaxies (MMOs)
Zackariasson et al.	2010	Psychographic	Conceptual-analytical	Progress & provocation, Power & domination, Helping & support, Friends & collaboration, Exploration & fantasy, Story & escapism	World of Warcraft (MMO)
Stewart	2011	Behavioral Psychographic	Conceptual-analytical	Guardian/Achiever, Rational/Explorer, Idealist/Socialiser, Artisan/Killer, Conqueror/Wanderer, Manager/Participant, Hardcore, Casual	The same ones as in the previous studies that it combines
Bartle	1996	Behavioral	Qualitative observations & Conceptual-analytical	Achiever, Explorer, Socialiser, Killer	MUDs
Lazzaro	2004	Behavioral	Conceptual-analytical	Easy fun, Hard fun, Altered states, The people factor	Non-exclusive
Drachen et al.	2009	Behavioral	Quantitative - clustering of gameplay data	Veteran, Solver, Pacifist, Runner	Tomb Raider: Underworld
Ip Jacobs	2005	Behavioral	Quantitative – factor analyses	Hardcore gamer, Casual gamer	Non-exclusive
Kallio et al.	2011	Behavioral	Triangulation of quantitative and qualitative data	Social mentalities, Casual mentalities, Committed mentalities	Non-exclusive
Hamari Lehdonvirta	2010	Behavioral	Conceptual-analytical combination of qualitative observations and marketing theory	For example character levels and classes	EverQuest, Habbo, Puzzle Pirates, World of Warcraft... (Online games)
Williams et al.	2006	In-game demographic	Triangulation of quantitative and qualitative data	Group centrality, Size of the guild, Type of server, Faction	World of Warcraft (MMO)

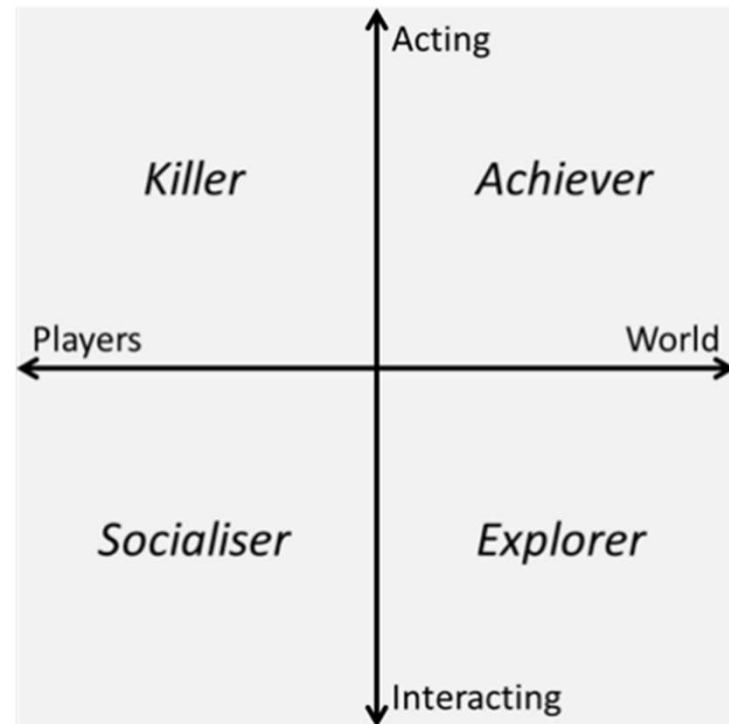
- Focus on *Psychographic* and *Behavioural*
- A total of 14 studies mentioned

# Psychographic Basis

- Hardcore-Casual according to Ip & Jacobs (2005)
  - **Hardcore:** someone who has a *deeper knowledge*, that engages *outside the game* itself, and *play longer*.
- Hardcore-Casual according to Steward (2011)
  - **Hardcore:** Want to be *intellectually challenged*, and want *interesting* and *compelling experiences*. More likely to prefer *adventure* or *puzzle* games.
  - **Casual:** Might prefer *action* or *strategy* games

# Behavioural Basis

- Drachen et al. (2009)
  - Veterans
  - Solvers
  - Pacifists
  - Runners
- Bartle (1996)
  - Achiever
  - Explorer
  - Killers
  - Socialiser



# Player Types: A Meta-Synthesis

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Part 2

Eirik Osnes

# In-game demographics

- Segmenting based on in game avatars, rather than players
  - Might give better results for marketers (Zackariasson et al. 2010)
- Two dimensional segmentation (Hamari & Lehdonvirta, 2010):
  - Vertical: Progress of character – Levels, rank etc.
  - Horizontal: Type of character - Classes, professions etc.
- Meaning and Value of Guilds (Williams et al. (2006))
  - Role-play oriented servers completely different than others in playstyle
  - Large achievement-oriented guilds vs. small tightknit social guilds
  - Not suggesting segmentation explicitly, but identifying factors.

# Typologies combined: a concept-centric summary

- Concepts: Common reoccurring ideas:
- Most covered:
  - Achievement
  - Sociability
- Less covered:
  - Domination
  - Immersion
- Least Covered:
  - In-game demographics
- Other:
  - Intensity
  - Exploration

	BARTLE   1996	LASSARO 2004	WHANG & CHANG 2004	IP & JACOBS 2005	WILLIAMS ET AL 2006	YEE 2006 / 2007 / 2012	DRACHEN ET AL. 2009	HAMARI & LEHDONVIRTA 2010	TSENG 2010	ZACKARIASSON ET AL. 2010	KALLIO ET AL. 2011	STEWART 2011
<b>Concept</b>												
<b>Gaming intensity and skill</b> ( <i>Hardcore, Committed mentalities, Aggressive gamer, Veteran, Casual, Casual mentalities, Inactive gamer, Pacifist, Avatar level, Amateur</i> )				✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	
<b>Achievement</b> ( <i>Achiever, Single-oriented player, Guardian/Achiever, Aggressive gamer, Achievement, Progress &amp; provocation, Power &amp; domination, Runner, hard fun, Casual (Stewart), Avatar level, (Semi-) professional</i> )	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
<b>Exploration</b> ( <i>Explorer, Solver, Rational/Explorer, Aggressive gamer, Social gamer, Immersion, Exploration &amp; Fantasy, Story &amp; escapism, curiosity</i> )	✓	✓				✓*	✓		✓	✓		✓
<b>Sociability</b> ( <i>Socialiser, Social mentalities, Community-oriented player, Idealist/Socialiser, Social, Helping &amp; support, the people factor, Friends &amp; Collaboration, (Semi-)professional, Amateur</i> )	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Domination</b> ( <i>Killer, Artisan/Killer, Aggressive gamer, Off-real world oriented player, Progress &amp; provocation, Power &amp; domination, Casual (Stewart)</i> )	✓		✓						✓	✓		✓
<b>Immersion</b> ( <i>Immersion, Committed mentalities, Exploration &amp; fantasy, Story &amp; escapism, Off-real world oriented player, altered states, Hardcore (Stewart)</i> )		✓	✓		✓	✓				✓	✓	✓
<b>In-game demographics</b> ( <i>Avatar class and profession, non-clan member, Amateur, (Semi-) professional, Group centrality, Size of the guild, Type of server, Faction</i> )					✓			✓				



# Criticism on player types

- Should be addressed as scales rather than categories
- Player types are abstractions of abstractions: should be interpreted as archetypes
- Motivation and behaviours might not transfer between different types of games
- Can a player be classified as one single player type?
- Might seem counterproductive if investigating player experience on richer level
- Player types not defined the same in different papers – hard to compare research.
- Question whether should adopt existing psychological frameworks, rather than create new for research. (Some are already based on these)

# Discussion

- Amount of dimensions for player types rather low, and mostly based on Bartle. (Only immersion figuring from other literature). Some categorize the dimensions in higher fidelity.
- No mention of sensory enjoyment, aesthetic enjoyment, playfulness or utilitarian gaming motivations
- Not yet exhausted the study of identifying player types:
  - Identification and abstraction
  - Working from behavioral use data, and connecting to psychological factors a potential avenue.

# Implications to game studies

- Largely based on MMOs and other online games – further studies could employ to other game types, platforms and contexts.
- Not necessarily very useful for qualitative game studies directly, but player types can act as starting point for finer level investigation.
- Investigating the self-fulfilling cycle:
  - Identify player types
  - Create game aiming at the different player types
  - The designed player types become the dominant player types for the game
- Could possibly be applied to other fields through gamification and persuasive games: commerce, orgs., lifestyle and marketing.

# Implications to game design and marketing

- Player types potentially good means of segmenting market – both real world and virtual.
- Many techniques used to determine player types in research also commonly used for segmentation. Creates typologies for segmenting.
- Paper potentially a good starting point for a thorough segmentation.
- Designers gain knowledge of common behavioural patterns and can develop accordingly.