



Anti-Social Behaviour in Games: How Can Game Design Help?

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Me



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Games User Researcher, PhD in Psychology,
former university lecturer, & former shadowy
government scientist out to kill you all.



Gortag



Lag!Gortag



Lag! Gortag



Gortag42



Player Research

VIDEO GAME USER RESEARCH & PLAYTESTING

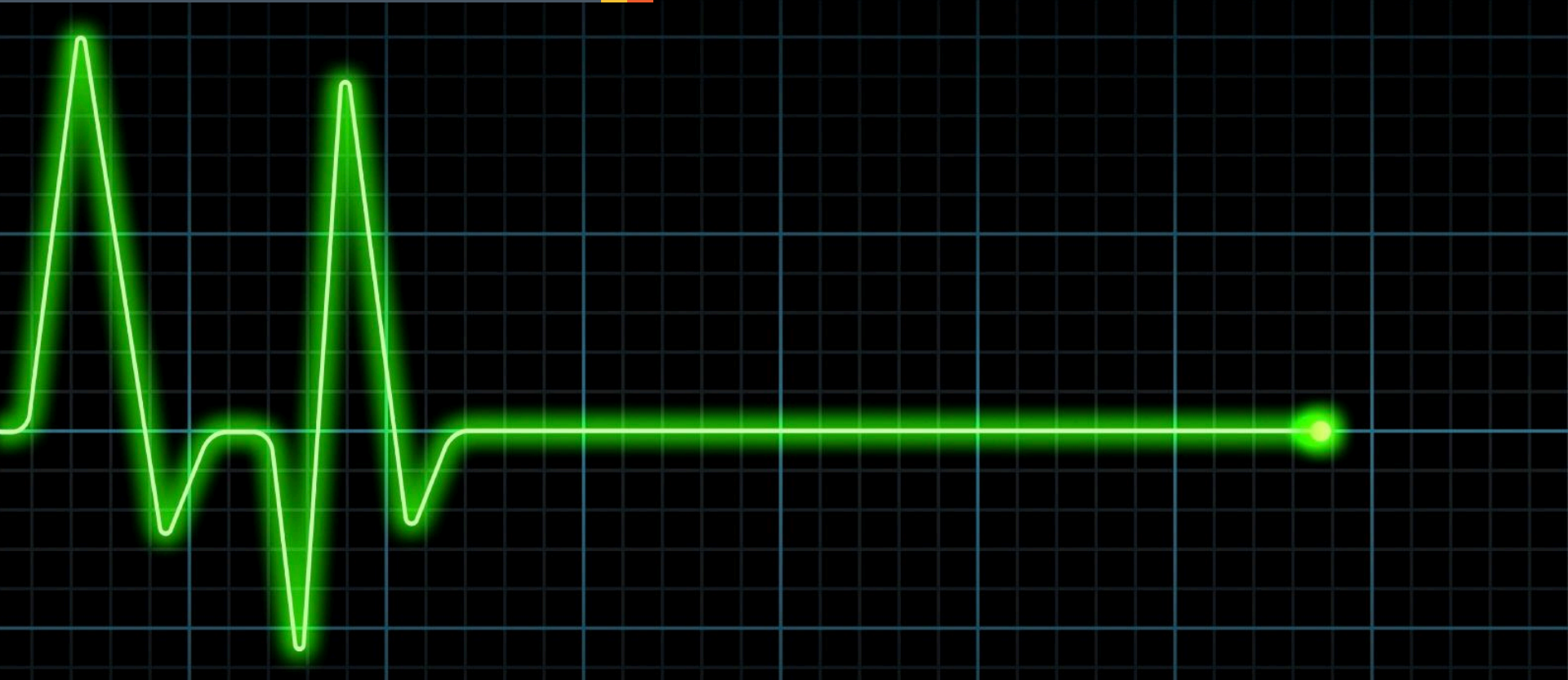


THANKS!

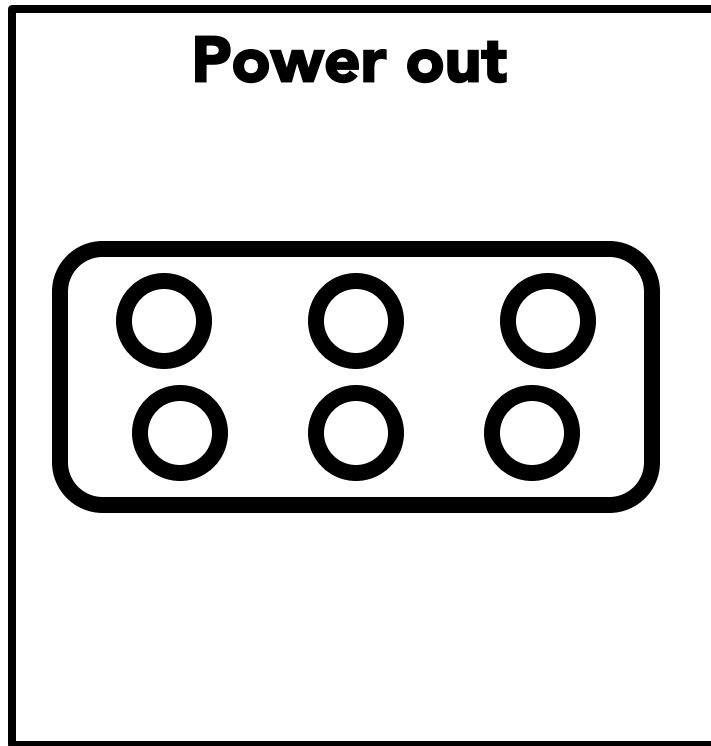
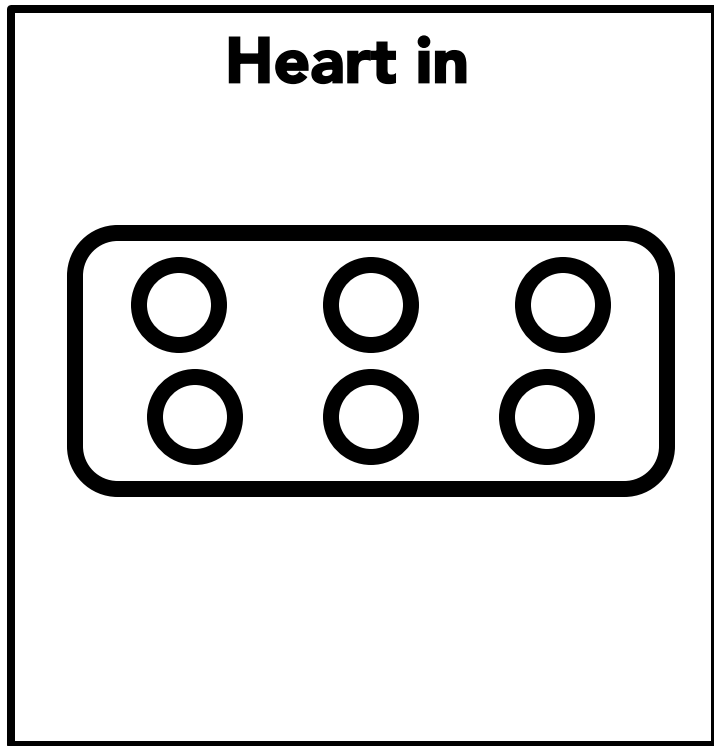


Kate Edwards, Mike Ambinder,
& Ben Dressler

A Sad Story



A Different View



Hindsight Bias



HINDSIGHT

Those were the droids you were looking for



A Sad Story



[ALLIES] xXD45kn355Xx: WTF

[ALLIES] xXD45kn355Xx: why no help??

[ALL] xXD45kn355Xx: noob team

[ALLIES] xXD45kn355Xx: ALT-F4 delete local content

[ALLIES] xXD45kn355Xx: die



A Different View



Premise #1

Anti-social behaviour in games is a problem

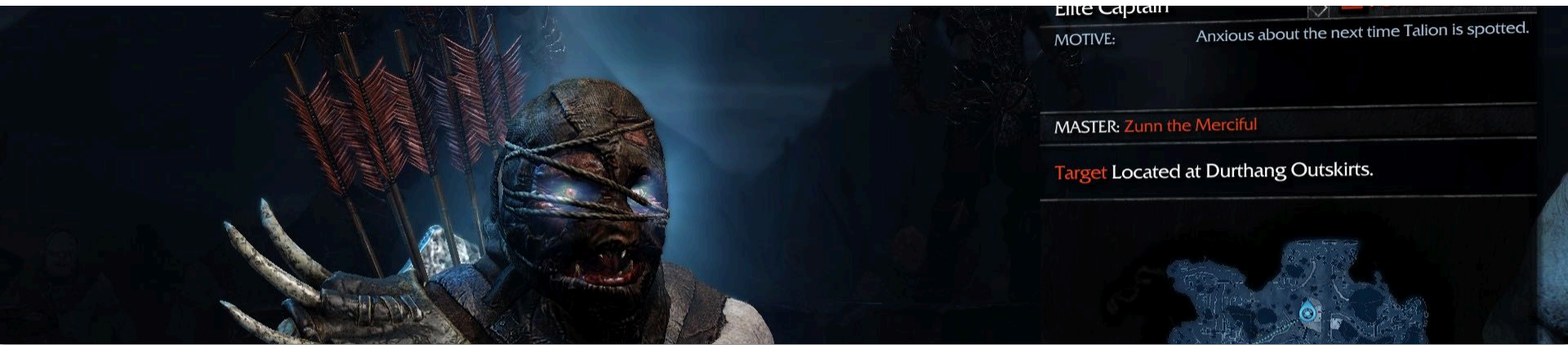
“The **only significant predictor** we found for why someone would quit Dota early on was having a game **where someone else was reported for abusive behaviour – nothing else mattered**”

- Mike Ambinder, Valve



Premise #2

Behaviour is an emergent property of a complex web of interactions within a system



Premise #3



Game systems, mostly unintentionally, reward anti-social behaviour.

Good behaviour usually goes unrecognised, unrewarded, and is sometimes even punished.



The Internet?



#1: Anti-social behaviour on the internet is a problem

#2: Behaviour is an emergent property of a complex web of interactions within a system

#3: Many internet systems reward anti-social behaviour. Whereas, good behaviour goes unrecognised, unrewarded, and/or punished.



Premise #4

We **design and influence** game systems.

We can **reduce anti-social behaviour** in games.



The Three E's

EDUCATION
ENFORCEMENT
ENGINEERING





GDC Registration

A large red banner with white text is mounted on the exterior of a modern building. The banner reads "GDC Registration". The building has a glass facade and a complex structural design with many white columns. In the foreground, several people are walking towards the entrance. A yellow banner with the word "EDUCATION" is overlaid on the bottom left of the image.



EDUCATION

A yellow banner with the word "EDUCATION" in white capital letters is overlaid on the bottom left of the image. The banner is partially obscured by the building's glass facade and the people walking in the foreground.

Examples

- Loading screen messages
- PR Campaigns
- Talks
- Twitter campaigns
- Modeling

Relatively easy to do



The Summoner's Code

WHAT IS LOL?

NEW PLAYER GUIDE

CHAT COMMANDS

COMMUNITY INTERACTION

SUMMONER'S CODE

The Summoner's Code

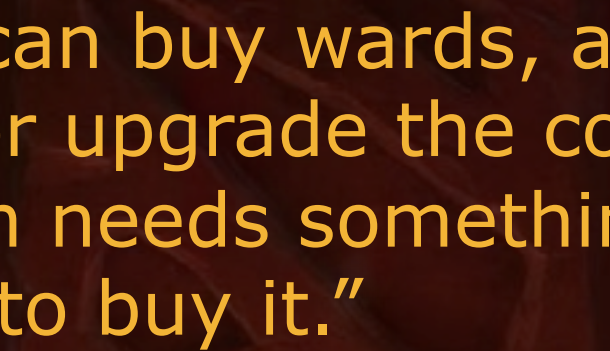
1

Support Your Team

"[Teamwork] is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results."
-Andrew Carnegie

While we all carry a diverse set of individual ambitions and expectations into a game of League of Legends, once we hit the Field we're a part of a team. For better or worse, our fates are intertwined with that of our teammates. Once the game gets into full swing, you have to make a choice between being a positive force for your team, or contributing to your own demise.

Being a good team player begins at champion select. Be open minded when considering the needs of your team. If you're the last one to pick, try to fill a niche in your team that hasn't already been filled. If everyone's picked and something stands out as a deficiency in your team composition, try asking for another player to fill the gap, or change roles to embrace that responsibility yourself. Remember, that by taking on a role you don't normally play, you'll learn more about unfamiliar champions and increase



"Anyone can buy wards, and anyone can buy or upgrade the courier. If your team needs something, don't be afraid to buy it."

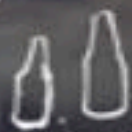
Anyone can buy wards, and anyone can buy or upgrade the courier. If your team needs something, don't be afraid to buy it.

We believe in it



Other people make mistakes
Slow down

Be the
ARTIST
NOT THE
CANVAS



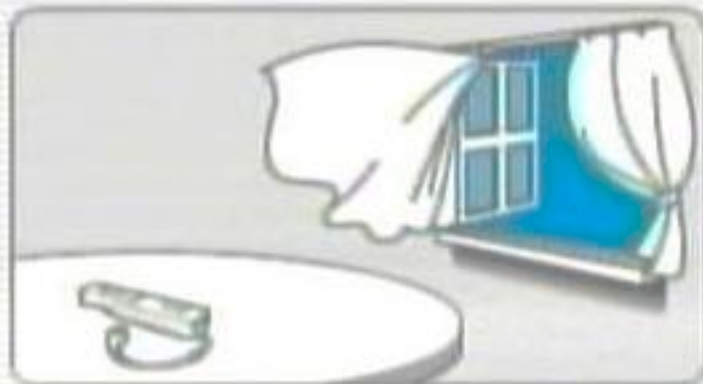
DRINK RESPONSIBLY

Be the artist, not



“WINNERS DON’T USE DRUGS”

William S. Sessions, Director, FBI



Why not take a break?
You can pause the game
by pressing ⊕.

WiiSports



The least effective option

Report Card

Name: Education

Raise Awareness:

A

Increase Knowledge:

A

Change Behaviour:

C



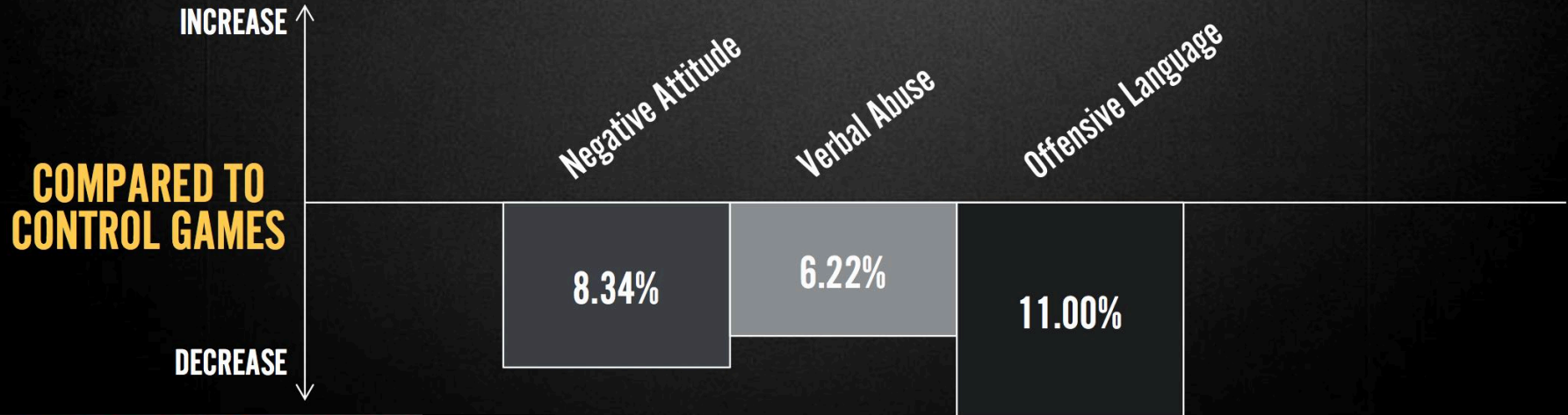
OPTIMUS PRIME RESULTS

<http://gdcvault.com/play/1017940/The-Science-Behind-Shaping-Player>

TIP: "Teammates perform worse if you harass them after a mistake."

FONT: Red

LOCATION: Loading Screen



JEFFREY "LYTE" LIN



*Optimus data from 11/2012

Education

Creates support for,
and combines with,
other measures.

**A step on the way to
a solution**





Xbox Live Code of Conduct

This document was last updated: January 2014

The Code of Conduct outlines the rules that you need to follow to help ensure that Xbox.com, Xbox Live and Games for Windows Live are fun for everyone.

A. Using Xbox Live and other services

What you can and should do:

- Be polite and treat others with respect. Just because you're online doesn't mean you should be insensitive.
- Make friends. If you find players you enjoy gaming with, put them on your preferred gamers list.
- Be good at a game. You will NEVER be suspended because you are too good.
- Have fun!

Privacy and Family Settings:

- Know your [privacy settings](#) and use them to help create and control the experience you want.
- If you're a parent, you can use [Family Settings](#) to control the activities and experiences available to your children. For example, you can prohibit voice and video communications, block purchasing and choose whom your children are allowed to play with online.

Complaint System and Player Feedback:

- If you encounter an enjoyable player:
 - Send a Friend Request

Related Links

[Xbox Live Terms of Use](#)[Xbox.com Terms of Use](#)



ENFORCEMENT

Punishment

The **addition of a penalty** or the **removal of a reward/benefit** to **reduce** the **probability** of a **behaviour occurring** again.

Deterrent effect:

- The **certainty** of detection
- The **swiftness** of delivering the penalty
- The **severity** of the penalty





CERTAINTY

SWIFTNESS

SEVERITY



Banhammers

- Automatic detection and action best (**certain** and **swift**)
- Player report slower and less certain
- Penalties should be **proportionate** and **representative**



REPORT PLAYER

m2



Select a category



Communication Abuse

They were abusive over a communication channel (text or voice)

More information:

using offensive language|

CANCEL

Reports Remaining: 2

Total reports submitted: 0

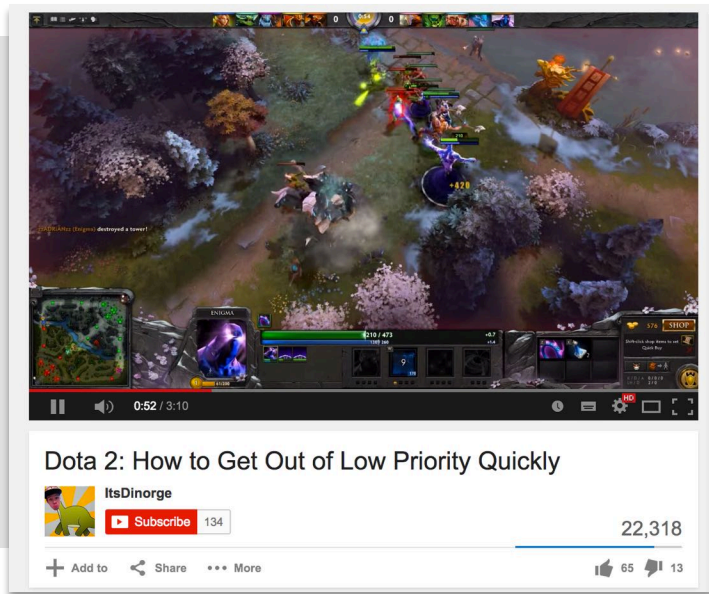
SUBMIT

Results

- 35% fewer negative words used in chat
- 32% fewer communication reports
- 1% of active player base is currently banned
- 61% of banned players only receive one ban

Player Prisons

Low Priority and cheaters queues/playlists

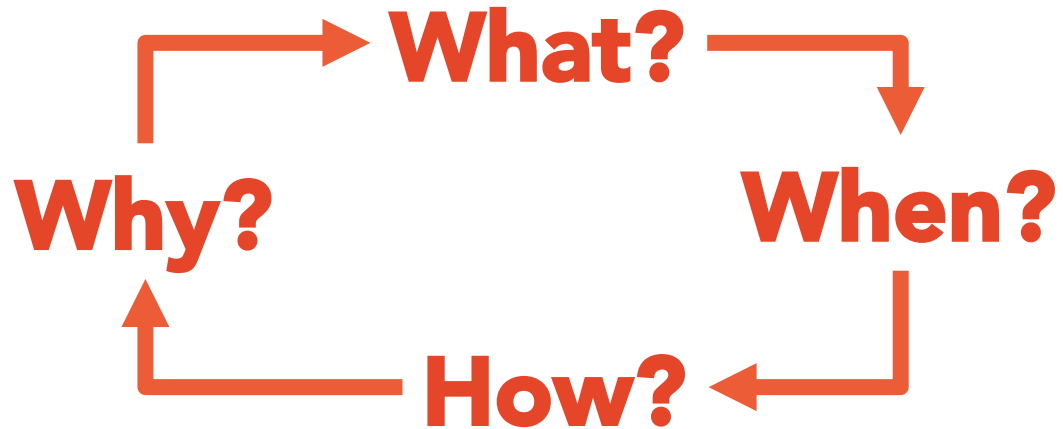


"My team was just messing around and just kinda goofing off – I'm not quite sure why..."

- ItsDinorage

FEEDBACK VITAL

Enforcement systems succeed or fail based on their feedback loops.



THANK YOU

We've recently taken action against one or more players you've previously reported for bad conduct. You have received an additional report submission to use. Thanks for your help in making the Dota 2 community a friendlier place.

OK

TRIBUNAL REFORM CARDS

[http://gdcvault.com/play/1017940/
The-Science-Behind-Shaping-Player](http://gdcvault.com/play/1017940/The-Science-Behind-Shaping-Player)

JEFFREY "LYTE" LIN



Reviewing:
Case #5657463
In this case: 4 reports | 3 games



Decision
Punish

Agreement
Majority

Punishment
Time Ban

Recent games:

1

2

3

General Information

Game Type
Classic

Game Length
32:00

Outcome
Loss

Color legend

Ally

Enemy

Reported Player

Report Comments

1

Reported by: Ally

2

Reported by: Ally

Chat Log

Filter: ☒ Allies ☐ Enemies ☐ All

Dr. Mundo [00:01:46] aw
Ahri [00:01:48] dammit
Ahri [00:01:54] runes op
Tristana [00:02:13] ahirt wtf??
Ahri [00:02:17] wtf
Ahri [00:02:20] i mid
Tristana [00:02:23] i go mid
Dr. Mundo [00:02:23] got top
Tristana [00:02:25] i first
Ahri [00:02:30] noob
Ahri [All] [00:02:42] GG
Ahri [All] [00:03:01] bad team
Ahri [00:05:11] brb
Sejuani [00:05:17] k
Tristana [00:05:22] mid ss

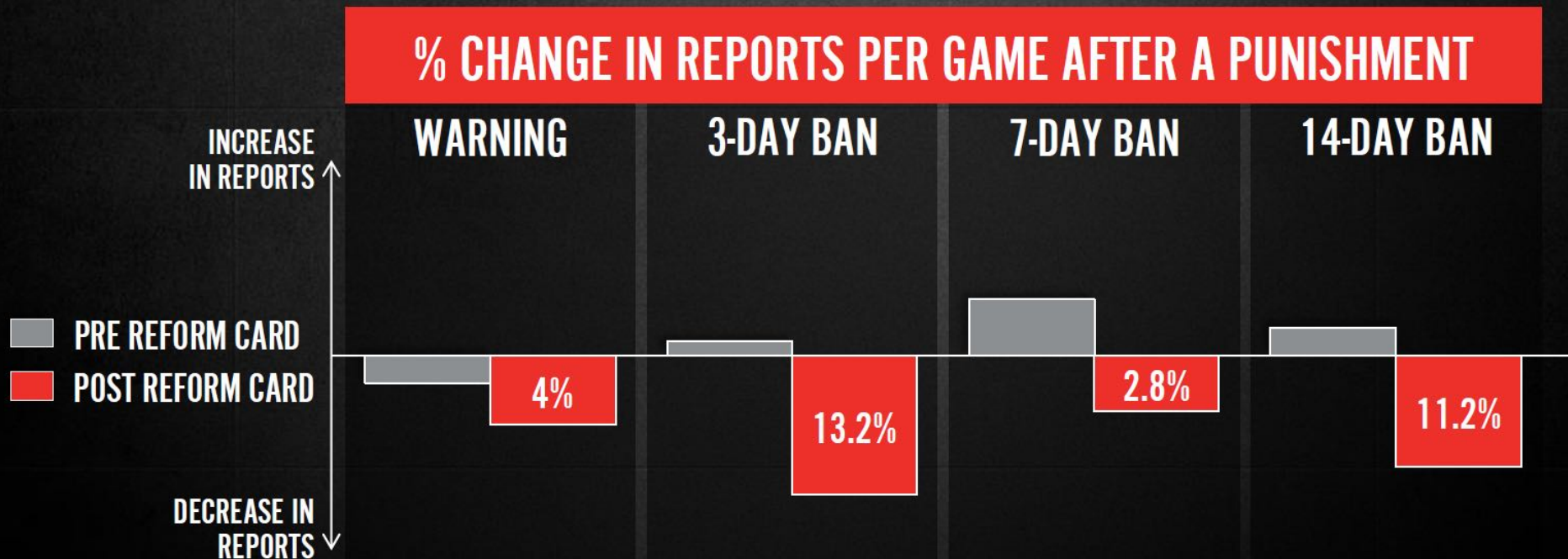
Players

Level



TRIBUNAL REFORM CARDS

<http://gdcvault.com/play/1017940/The-Science-Behind-Shaping-Player>



JEFFREY "LYTE" LIN



*REPORT DATA FROM 5/19/2012 TO 8/19/20

Punishment

- Breeds resentment and avoidance
- Teaches **what you did wrong**, not what **you should do right**
- Draws attention



Encouragement

The overlooked, more effective, side of feedback

Premise #3



Game systems, mostly unintentionally, reward anti-social behaviour. Good behaviour usually goes unrecognised, unrewarded, and is sometimes even punished.

WayneChaw

Aslans Farm All Gold

Create a Ranked Team

Profile

Ranked Stats

Match History

Champions

Runes

Masteries

Spells

Achievements

Find Su



WayneC

Le

Stats Overview

Ranked

No

Ranked Teams (3v3)
Aslans Farm All Gold

1612



Duo Queue

1536



Ranked Teams (5v5)
Aslans Farm All Gold

1400



Congratulations!

You have been recognized as one of the most positive team players in League of Legends. You're a strong, cooperative player and a shining example of good sportsmanship.

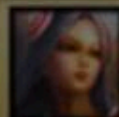
[Click here for more information](#)

Close

us available in 15:08

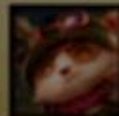
Ladder R

played Champions



Irelia

Games Played: 9(66%)



Teemo

Games Played: 7(71%)



Corki

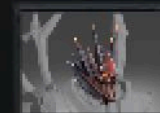
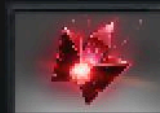
Games Played: 3(30%)

FEATURED HERO



SVEN

FEATURED ITEMS



Skywrath Mage

10/07/14



Skywrath Mage

10/06/14



Earthshaker

09/07/14



Venomancer

09/07/14



Techies

09/05/14

COMMENDATIONS

11



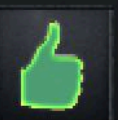
Friendly

2



Forgiving

3



Teaching

5



Leadership

LEVEL
24

TODAY

STORE

PLAY

WATCH

LIBRARY

COMMUNITY

LIVE TOURNAMENT

DOTA 2

OG

UPDATES

THE COMPENDIUM

BE PART OF THE BIGGEST DOTA EVENT EVER

LEARN MORE

INCLUDES

Immortal Treasures | Mini-Pudge Courier | Massi

Loading Screens | HUD Skin | Level Up Rewards

Chat Emoticons | Plus Much More

The Path to The Dota 2 Championship

New Team Matchmaking

June 18, 2014 - Dota Team

TEAMMATE EVALUATION



Pazuzu

Please rate the amount of cooperation (willingness to work together) your teammate displayed in the last match:



Please rate the level of friendliness (positive social impact on the game) your teammate exhibited in the last match:



Please rate your desire to play with this teammate again:



No Thanks

COACH THIS PARTY



PIS



OmadaKrou

AT

ling Match

ons: Europe West, Europe East

e modes: All Pick, All Random

ling Match

ons: Europe West, Europe East

e modes: All Pick, All Random

ling Match

ons: Europe West, Europe East

e modes: All Pick, All Random

ENDS

PLAYING DOTA

Related Content

[Snowdown fan art roundup!](#)

[Snowdown's nearly over!](#)

[Snowdown FAQ](#)



Celebrating the end of this year's Snowdown

BY PABRO

*Say farewell to your friends, for Snowdown has passed.
The Legend of the Poro King conquered at last.
We won some, we lost some, we tossed many poros.*

*Some landed and some missed, that is just how it goes.
Who really won this Snowdown? Only the poros know.
Every single game, a unique Snowdown surprise.*

*The year may be over, but only Amumu cries--
Even if it's over, we learned one thing at the end:
Snowdown gathers strangers, but we all leave as friends.*

Thank you! Together we've had another incredible year and we've enjoyed taking a few big steps in League's evolution with you. While Snowdown may be over, there's one more thing we wanted to do to commemorate 2014.

Over the next few days, we'll be rewarding positive League of Legends players with a classic Mystery Gift as thanks for being such an awesome part of our community. If you haven't received a chat restriction, ranked restriction, 14-day ban or permanent ban in 2014, and you meet the requirements to receive a Mystery Gift (you're Level 5 or higher and there are at least 10 skins you don't own), you're on our list!

Thank you again for a fantastic 2014. Share what you unlocked in your Mystery Gift below, and we'll see you on the Rift in the new year!



ENGINEERING

Engineering

Designing to reduce or remove the ability to be anti-social

Premise #2 & #3

#2: Behaviour emerges from system interactions

#3: Games often, unintentionally, encourage anti-social behaviour and discourage pro-social



Engineering



Journey (2012):

- No communication
- Automatic helping and nothing else
- Similarity
- Mechanically optional
- Instanced



Unreal Tournament 2004 lends incontrovertible proof
to John Gabriel's Greater Internet Fuckwad Theory.

Normal Person

Anonymity

Audience

Total Fuckwad



FALSE

2+3=Cats

$$\sigma_x = \sqrt{\frac{1}{n} \sum x_i^2 - \frac{1}{n} (\sum x_i)^2}$$

Shitcock



Loot Systems

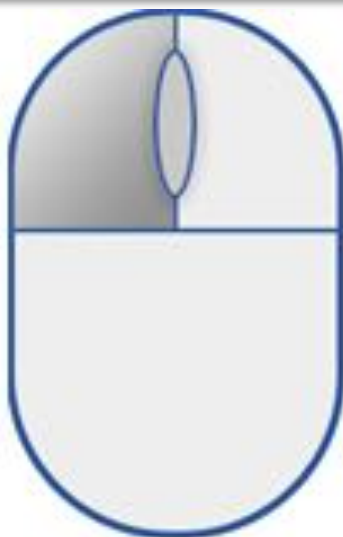


Communication Systems





[ALLIES] Cyborgmatt: Enemy Riki has a ▶ Tango
[ALLIES] Cyborgmatt: Enemy Riki has a ▶ Healing Salve
[ALLIES] Cyborgmatt: Enemy Riki has a ▶ Slippers of Agility
[ALLIES] Cyborgmatt: Enemy Riki has a ▶ Iron Branch
[ALLIES] Cyborgmatt: Enemy Riki has a ▶ Iron Branch



ПОДРОБНОСТИ

A B C
US 167 15:14 RU 245



Machine
Munite
Flameword

T
3 4
V

51/102
[AUTO]
1 +100







JEFFREY "LYTE" LIN

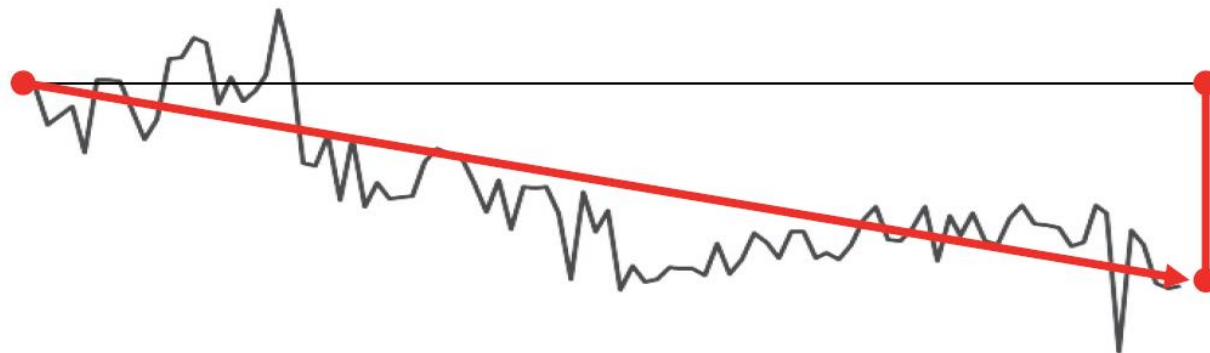


OK

Cancel

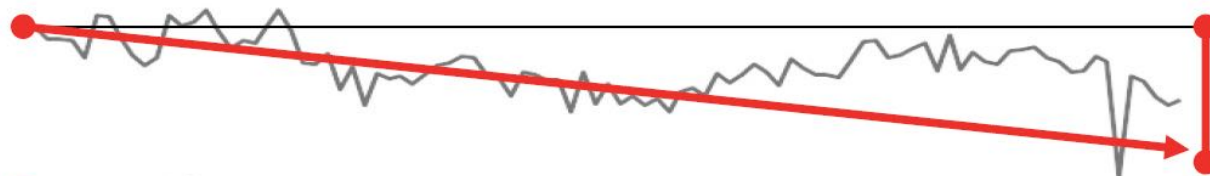
<http://gdcvault.com/play/1017940/The-Science-Behind-Shaping-Player>

REPORTS PER ACTIVE PLAYER

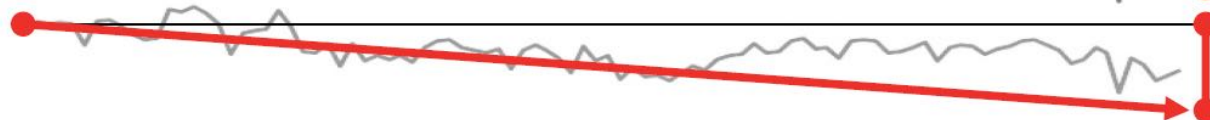


<http://gdcvault.com/play/1017940/The-Science-Behind-Shaping-Player>

-17%
in Offensive Language
on Summoner's Rift



-12%
in Verbal Abuse
on Summoner's Rift



-6%
in Negative Attitude
on Summoner's Rift

JEFFREY "LYTE" LIN



*REPORT DATA FROM 5/1/2012 TO 9/1/2012



Shapeshift

Hero Power

+1 Attack this turn. +1
Armor.

ENEMY TURN

Thanks

Sorry

Well Played

Oops

Greetings

Threaten



0/0

TOGGLE VOICE CHANNEL



Strike Team Chat



TOGGLE VOICE CHANNEL



Fireteam Chat



Matchmaking

SOCIAL SETTINGS

CHATTINESS

MOTIVATION

TEAMWORK

tone

CHATTY

< NO PREFERENCE (DEFAULT) >






TEAM PLAYER

POLITE

No preference set for competitiveness.



You can always change your role preferences in the lobby. Your new preferences will go into effect the following round.

1	2	3	4	5
				
ASSAULT	TRAPPER	MEDIC	MONSTER	SUPPORT

ACCEPT

League of Legends 3.13.13_09_30_23_43



52:09

X



Player 1

1000000

1000000



Player 1

Renekton

POSITION

Top Lane

ROLE

Fighter

SPELLS



RUNES

Rune Page 2

MASTERIES

Mastery Page 1

Summoner's Rift

5v5 Classic



Invited

Player 2



Consider avoiding compulsory “L Plates”



Monetisation

**"More players
spending more makes
for a more positive
gaming experience"**

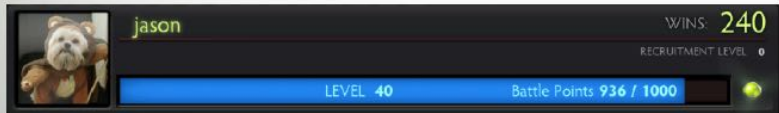
- Kyle Davis, Valve



POSITIVE EXTERNALITIES



DOTA BATTLE BOOSTERS



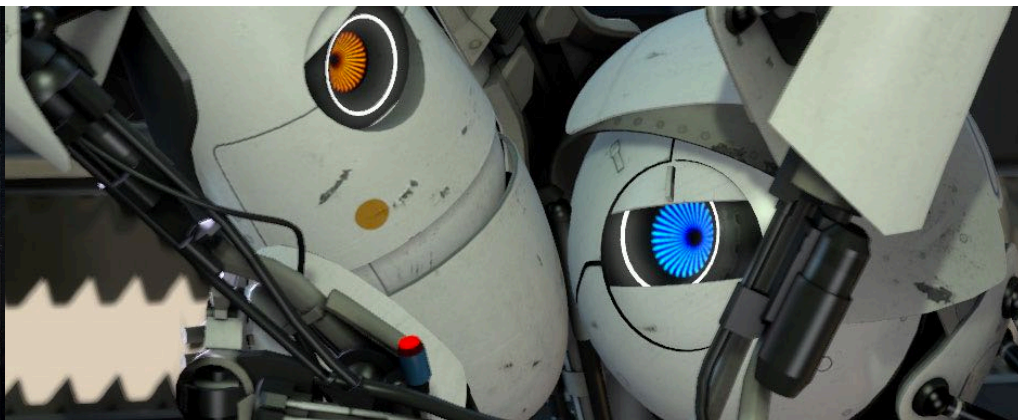
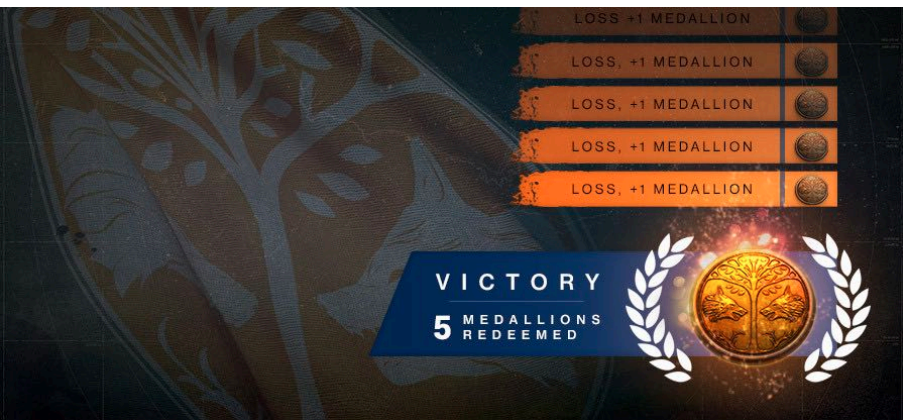
- Goal: “I celebrate when the guy next to me buys one”
- Rise of positive, lowering of negative comments at round start
- Iteration to clarify value proposition

Kyle Davis
Valve

<http://media.steampowered.com/apps/steamdevdays/slides/economies.pdf>

Cooperation vs Competition

Competition motivates those who think they can win, **cooperation motivates and involves everyone**





QUARANTINE
CONTAGIOUS DISEASE
NO ONE MAY ENTER
THIS BUILDING BY ORDER OF
THE CHIEF OF POLICE AND
DEFENSE AGENT
TRESPASSERS WILL BE
PROSECUTED
NCEDA

50 480

15



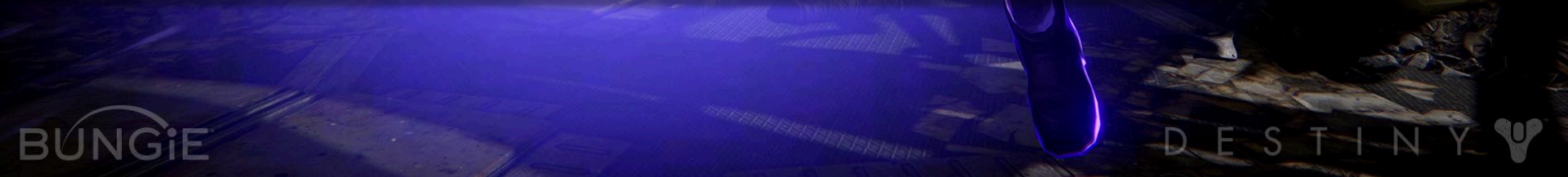
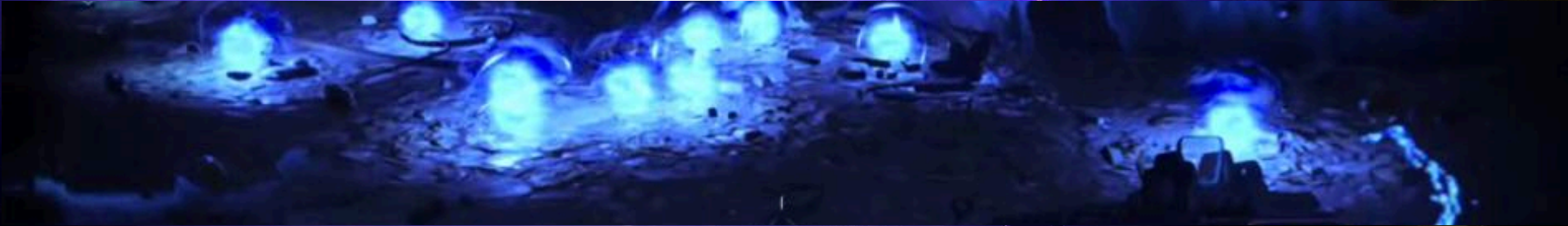


QUARANTINE
CONTAGIOUS DISEASE
NO ONE MAY ENTER OR LEAVE
THIS BUILDING BY ORDER OF
THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH SERVICES
TRESPASSERS WILL BE
PROSECUTED
CEDA

50 480

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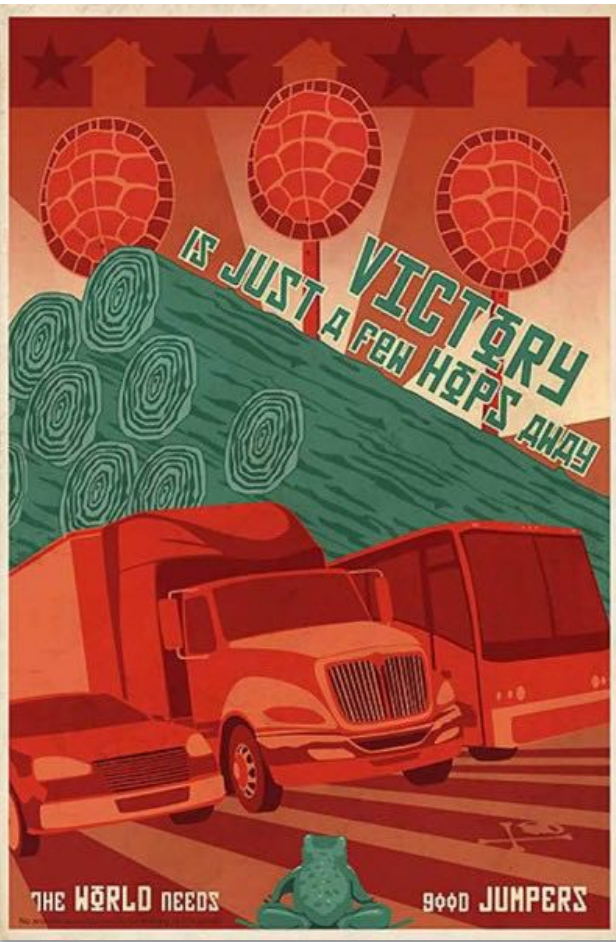
THERE'S NO "I" IN TEAM

Heroes features approachable team-based play without sacrificing depth or variety. Whether it's joining with allies in a group fight, or working together to overcome each battleground's unique challenges, you're rewarded for playing as a team. And the hero roles run the gamut from stone-cold death-dealers, to town-razing specialists, to pure healers—each capable of making distinct, valuable contributions to their team's war effort. The game even includes some very specialized heroes, like Abathur, who offsets his lack of head-to-head impact with special abilities that affect the entire battleground.

Other?

- Public behavioural commitments
- Automatic helping
- Automatic pro-social animations
- Gifting/Altruism
- Scoring systems & Achievement design
- Similarity/Commonality (e.g. red vs blue)
- And more...





#1: Anti-social behaviours are a problem in games

#2: Behaviour emerges from system interactions

#3: Games often, unintentionally, encourage anti-social behaviour & discourage pro-social behaviour

#4: We have the power to reduce anti-social behaviour in games

QUESTIONS?



Player Research

GAME DEVELOPERS CONFERENCE® 2015

MARCH 2-6, 2015 GDCONF.COM



Gortag



Lagl Gortag



LagLGortag



Gortag42



ben@playerresearch.com



@ikbenben