

Abstract

In this dissertation I am presenting a philosophical approach to the ethics of computer games. Video games are a cultural phenomenon that raises moral questions due to their content and their simulative nature. There are widespread ethical concerns related with computer games, but there has not been yet any systematic approach to what the ethics of videogames may be. This dissertation provides such an approach.

In this dissertation I will define the ethical ontology of computer games, and the moral nature of players. To do so, I will use a range of different disciplines and theories, from Computer Game Research to Computer Game Design, Post-Phenomenology or Computer Science. Once the ethics of games as objects and of players as agents is defined, I will provide a philosophical approach to the ethics of computer games, based on Virtue Ethics and Information Ethics.

The main objective of this dissertation is to define the ethics of computer games. This means to define what kind of ethical discourses we find in computer games, in which ways or where do we find those discourses, and which ethical theories can be applied to the study of the ethics of computer games. This dissertation will define computer games' ethics and methods for their analysis and development.

This dissertation is an attempt to provide a comprehensive overview of the ethics of computer games, a field scarcely researched but deserving of more attention due to the increasing ethical stakes that computer games, as an emergent cultural form of expression and entertainment, pose to developed societies.