

Discover Lecture Series

Presented by the Faculty of Science and Engineering



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Whose Life Will You Save? The Design of Moral Choices in Video Games

Abstract

From *Ultima IV* to *Disco Elysium*, video games have a long history of presenting players with challenging moral choices, something they are uniquely positioned to do. Other media, such as film, television and literature, can provide us with morally difficult situations to ponder, but only games allow us – require us – to make the choice ourselves and live with the consequences.

In this presentation, Dr Malcolm Ryan will dive into the design principles behind such games and will show how theories of moral philosophy and psychology can help us design more sophisticated works. Along the way, we will also decide the fate of Frankie, a game protagonist with a difficult day ahead of them (to say the least).

Biography



Dr Malcolm Ryan is Course Director of the Game Design and Development program and Director of the Games User Research Lab in the School of Computing at Macquarie University. His research involves user-experience design and evaluation of serious games with a focus on ethical decision-making, as well as applications of artificial intelligence to video games.

His work aims to integrate lessons from AI, psychology, cognitive science, education and the arts to enrich the design of games and enable the creation of more sophisticated and engaging works.