

# New Theories for New Media

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# New Theories for New Media

- ‘Of course, games should also be studied within existing fields and departments ... game studies should contain media studies, aesthetics, sociology etc. But it should exist as an independent academic structure, because it cannot be reduced to any of the above.’ (Aarseth 2001).

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- Er det tilstrækkeligt at opgradere traditionelle teorier og metoder fra medieforskningen, film- og litteraturvidenskab, eller kræver den nye tekniske og kommunikative dagligdag, at den analytiske og kritiske forskning forandres radikalt? (Juel 1997, p.7)

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- To describe cinema in terms of contiguous art forms makes as much sense as it would to describe these art forms in terms of cinema: to call painting "static cinema"; music "the cinema of sounds"; literature "the cinema of words." This is especially misleading with respect to a new art form. Underlying it all is a reactionary *passeisme* – the tendency to describe new phenomena in terms of old ones. (Tynjanov 1981 (1927), p.85)

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- Research activities within the humanities (a conservative approach)
  - Historical
    - Synchronous – diachronic
  - Analytical
    - Description – systemization - evaluation
  - Theoretical
    - Vocabulary – concepts and relations
  - Rhetoric
    - Design and construction

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- Some vocabularies and theories:
  - Sociology:
    - Empirical methodology and games, social activities and social constructions within and around games etc.
  - Philosophy and aesthetics:
    - Ontology and epistemology of games, aesthetics and games, ethics and games etc.
  - Psychology:
    - Cognition, emotion, perception, and the experience of games etc.
  - Game design:
    - Innovative game mechanics, game worlds, and interfaces etc.
  - Other approaches (not included above)
    - Approaches that the author cannot think of as being part of any of the other topics might be submitted to this category.

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- How to apply already existing theories to a new field?
  - Analogy
    - Understanding the object by the identification of similarities
  - Application
    - Understanding the object as another example that confirms the theory
  - Articulation
    - The existing theory go into a dialog with the object in order to extract the parts which the theory cannot comply with

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- What is the object of study?
  - The Game
  - The gaming situation
  - The player or the context of the game

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- The cognitive turn – the situation – articulated
  - Cognitive theory articulated within film studies
    - First Wave: The viewer is doing cognitive operations
    - Second Wave: The viewer is an emotional and feeling entity
    - Third Wave: The viewer is a functional piece of biology.
  - Cognitive theory articulated within computer games
    - The player is actively involved and the relation between competences and skills is made explicit – flow.
    - Emotionering – self esteem and the complexity of simulation
    - The player is a functional piece of biology

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- The case of identification and immersion
  - The loss of the self
  - The active construction of a POV
  - Simulation theory
  - Mirror neurons

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