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Ludic Ideologies: Perspectives on Play

'[Play] is a structuring activity, the activity out of which understanding comes. Play is at one and the same time the location where we question our structures of understanding and the location where we develop them.' (James S. Hans, 1981) This presentation focuses upon the ludic system within a selection of sports digital games, illustrating how the user interface and game mechanics demand of the user a certain performance that aligns itself with the entertainment ethos of the wider sports-media complex, evident in the 'Trick Stick' interface within EA Sports' FIFA series, and the 'Total Punch Control System' of EA Sports' Fight Night boxing videogames. Through careful analysis of the rewards, absences and affordances of certain game mechanics (both ludic and representational), this investigation exposes the inherent bias of the system of play, its ludic ideology.