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The Proteus Paradox How Online

Proteus, the mythical sea god who could alter his appearance at will, embodies one of the promises of online games: the ability to reinvent oneself. Yet inhabitants of virtual worlds rarely achieve this liberty, game researcher Nick Yee contends.

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Proteus, the mythical sea god who could alter his appearance at will, embodies one of the promises of online games: the ability to reinvent oneself. Yet inhabitants of virtual worlds rarely achieve this liberty, game researcher Nick Yee contends. Though online games evoke freedom and escapism, Yee ...

The Proteus Paradox: How Online Games and Virtual Worlds ...

But the Proteus Paradox isn't just about how our offline politics don't change when we enter virtual worlds, it's also about how things beyond our control end up altering how we think and behave. In this and the remaining chapters, I'll detail how virtual worlds provide unparalleled tools for controlling us.

The Proteus Paradox: How Online Games and Virtual Worlds ...

Yee certainly offers some interesting data on how gaming has become integral to modern life. He is

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right to state that “video gamers no longer form a fringe subculture” and we learn a lot in The Proteus Paradox about how “game thinking” and game mechanisms have embedded themselves in corporate culture. However, on the larger, crucial philosophical questions of the subtitle – how online games and virtual worlds change us – there is little for social theorists to learn here.

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This is the Proteus Paradox. Without a more careful look how these spaces do and do not change us, the promises of virtual worlds and online games are being subverted. Video gamers no longer form a fringe subculture; these games are rapidly converging with many aspects of our everyday lives.

nick yee the proteus paradox

Yee's Proteus also has snags. Instead of freedom and empowerment during online games, quite the opposite occurs. Rank superstition is prevalent, false gender stereotypes are being made true, and offline nationality can be a matter of life or death. Even when we think we are fully in control, our avatars change the way we think and behave.

The Proteus Paradox: How Online Games and Virtual Worlds ...

— Nick Yee, The Proteus Paradox: How Online Games and Virtual Worlds Change Us - and How They Don't “Not only are the gender overlaps large, but the gender differences are actually inflated at the outset. One danger of studying gaming populations (or any natural community) is that of bringing underlying biases into the data.

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A surprising assessment of the ways that virtual worlds are entangled with human psychology. Proteus, the mythical sea god who could alter his appearance at will, embodies one of the promises of online games: the ability to reinvent oneself. Yet inhabitants of virtual worlds rarely achieve this liberty, game researcher Nick Yee contends.

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And where we think we are fully in control, unique psychological levers in virtual worlds (such as our avatars) powerfully change how we think and behave. This is the Proteus Paradox. Without a more careful look how these spaces do and do not change us, the promises of virtual worlds and online games are being subverted.”

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