

Comments from Ann Bostrom for 2/27/07 C-VPESSTeleconference

Comments on Part 3 Sections

2.2 – restructure so that it flows better (editor?). It suffers a little from the template it was written to fit.

2.3 – Fun to read and well written, but covers some topics in quite a lot of detail - more depth than is in most of the report currently (it appears on first read). I'd favor keeping most of it though. Maybe trim the first section a little.

3. Would like to see more discussion of development of survey items in this section – adding a small section on survey content choice might address this, and my other comments/questions below.

3.2.2 – the focus group write-up should include some discussion of group processes (e.g., polarization, or deference to expertise, from decision research on groups) that can influence focus group discussions and outcomes.

3.2.3 – while section 3.2.3 refers to the mental models section elsewhere in the report, I don't think that section is in the report currently. Some mental models studies have relied on probability sampling, rather than convenience samples; the survey phase of a mental models study should rely on probability sampling whenever possible (like any other survey). Further, a decision analysis-based approach such as the mental models approach described in Morgan et al. 2002, provides a science-based method of identifying information needs (relevant to the discussion on page 217-218).

In Appendix A, the authors state “once a questionnaire has ben drafted according to the rules above” (p 317; see also page 323-324 – “with pretest respondents, who can be told about the ecosystem” – but these rules in no way determine the actual content of the survey, or what they should be told about the ecosystem. Exploratory research, and a mental models approach in particular, can guide content choices.

The discussion on 212 ignores the potential context ‘vacuum’ in virtual environments. Actions in real life are purposeful. In virtual reality, the game imposes a goal, generally, making the game designer a potent framer of the results.

Might reference research on socially meaningful games (on page 213) as an example of this (e.g., Ian Bogost's).