

“I’m not worried about games making serial killers i’m worried about them making Wall Street Bankers”

C.Thi Nguyen's Hopeful analysis of games

I want to write about the view of games being agency as art. In his book games agency as art, C thi nguyen argues that by games having the doing component instead of just purely watching they are able to provide us with alternate agencies that we experience. “Game designers tell us who to be and what to care about during the game. Game designers sculpt alternate agencies, and game players submerge themselves in those alternate agencies. Thus the fact taht we play games demonstrate the fluidity of our own agency. We can throw ourselves for a little while, into a different and temporary motivations.

I look at this as a hopeful view for the future as we are lead to believe that we are born too late to make any meaningful change to our way of life. That we are too far going and there is no going back. This allow us to believe that people are capable of change and are able to accept set change

What I love about games is that if we look at them through this framework it provides us with an intrinsic value for labor (the struggle) that differs from our current reality. As with wall street bankers that only care about profits, a bad gamer will only care about winning and completely ignore the beauty of the game, the labor that produces set value. We’ve been trained to seek the outcome of everything we are doing. By having the beauty be the struggle, we achieve a freedom that was denied to us by only focusing on the ends. When we think about ends over anything we are creating a player that will not only never be satisfied but will never find the beauty of the game. Wheb we focus on the labor we are effectively flipping the pyramid of power around and allowing the labor to be the most important part and then the ends being some sort of temporary reward for the beauty you created.

Our current economic system only allow us to play a single game and rewards us by caring more about the achievement than to properly play the game. By imposition of quantifiable goals that determine our value of existence we are proving us away from every the enjoyment of the actual work we are performing as part of our projects of life.

This is the important part for game designers as to create new landscapes that have not been explored yet through the medium of the video game. We are tired of the same plots and the same stories being replicated, we are looking for something new.

This is where us immigrants need to step in, we have access to these ressources that aren’t available to everybody, we must use them as to tell our people’s stories.

With the current wave of layoffs i'm fully supporting people take their own route and give it a shot to create their own fantasy. Do it while you can atleast until unemployment runs out.

There are two conflicting views in game design. There's the view that play is freedom and that games should allow you to experience it how you want to explore them; like a sandbox.

Alternative to that view, there's a new rising view that games provide us with alternate agencies. C Thi Nguyen, in his analytical philosophy book, *Games: Agency As Art*, suggests that instead of game designers providing us a sandbox to play with, they should design who we are in the world and decide which objectives we should care about. Looking at games with this framework allows us to explore even further what we love so much about them.

By accepting being in a different reality with alternate objectives as to what we seek in real life, we are effectively allowing our existence to not be stuck as an object in the world but something that is able to transcend our made up character.

(Expand on the idea before reaching this paraphrase)

To summarize his words, the fact that we love games so much means that we love to have fluidity of our agencies and allow ourselves to explore alternative realities.

He describes two types of conflicting game styles, achievement playing vs striving play. Achievement players will put the ends above the means. This is the type of game style you want to avoid as these are sore losers or people that t would continue to play the game without enjoying just to get a reward. The other play style, is striving play which means that you care about the struggle itself. This is where the aesthetics of the game will really unravel. By having the medium be the doing and not the expecting the player in itself creates the beauty with the guide of the game designer. Take for example a game a From Software game. The failure and the struggle is what gives the player this experience and emotional turmoil that couldn't be achieve through another medium.

C Thi Nguyen has this saying that really resonates with me and highlights how we've been having the wrong conversation this whole time : **"I'm not worried about games making serial killers i'm worried about it making wall street bankers"**. In our current economical system we are only presented

If we emphasize a style of play that focuses on the struggle(Labor) we are effectively turning the pyramid of power by not prioritizing the outcomes, in the same way that we do in real life.

Beauty is not having the biggest house in the neighborhood, but rather it is the actions that you take and the labor that you make. This doesn't mean that we must focus on any kind of labor, but rather beautiful labor, that is labor that uplifts a community, that seeks to help out others and that seeks to make the world a better place. A kind of labor that brings purpose to our existence and it is as inclusive of others as it can be. This also puts into importance the process of failing. Failing which is seen as an intrinsically a bad thing can be beautiful in its own way and can be enjoyable without it being feared.

Video game critics by the fault of the medium being so new tend to put too much focus on the cinematic beauty of a game, the emotional story telling, the imagery, the dialogue, but tend to miss out that these things are only valuable if they make the struggle (game loop) more beautiful/enjoyable. In the same way that living in a nice city might make improve our lives but work would still make it feel miserable, graphics will only improve the game if the game is actually enjoyable and screams to show it's beauty where it matters.