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Computer games in the developing world: The value of non-instrumental engagement with ICTs, or taking play seriously.

The first author, B.E Kolko, was a professor in Tashkent, Uzbekistan and is the co-director of Tactical and Tactile Technology Lab. She is also CEO of Shift Labs. The second author, C. Putnam, is an associate professor at Depaul University and is primarily involved in Human Centered Design and creates therapy-centered game designs. Potential biases they can have are that both have a more positive outlook on Game learning so it could lead to ignoring the negatives. The major points of the article talks about how using games could help with the implementation of ICTS in Developing countries and the development of gaming in culture in developing areas. The article mainly focuses on two places in Taijikstan to look at how games can be used in Central Asia. Looking at the development of the gaming culture in these places, the authors concluded that games allow for a broader reach for ICTs, games can motivate innovation, and gaming culture can provide “first touch” to ICTs.

I think the idea of using games to introduce ICTs is a very interesting idea because for many people games can be more accessible compered to Internet and it is usually more entertaining. However, I wonder how impactful using games could be to learn certain skills. While I think it could help with problem-solving skills, and development of other computer related skills, I feel learning based games are a hit or miss. Often with ICTs, people are looking for ways to use it for education but take for example how I am in a gameful learning based course, I find there are certain problems with that learning method, primarily the social aspect/pressure of the course as we kind of are “competing” with each other for grades. On the other hand, I feel exploring games and learning could lead to positive results.

*Born Digital: Understanding the First Generation of Digital Natives*

This part of the reading focuses on how Internet has affected activism and how young people/ digital Natives have led to a rise in political activity. While voter turnout has dropped dramatically among the youth, political participation has risen largely due to the Internet. The Internet also allows political campaigns to be more efficient and increase participation. However, critics view visible activism online is only a convenient way to make a statement and that rise of blogs and such has caused more closed off political discussions. The author asserts that Internet engagement sites are facilitators of civic engagements and that the action takes place offline. The author also talks about how due to a more diverse media forum, has allowed individuals to become active participants in the creation, and understanding of news. The author states that digital technology has allowed for a more interactive relationship between people and media.

The Dark Side of the Digital Revolution

The article talks about the affects of connectivity in oppressive regimes. While connectivity has allowed people to start to gain access to more information outside of pre approved information given by the government, it is also allowing governments to implement more oppressive measures. Creating a digital police state, using facial-recognition systems and biometric signatures can allow governments to track you physically and digitally. The article also mentions how online activism has allowed decentralized protesting, however at some point there needs to be a more centralized power at some point in order for the protesting to be successful. However, as governments attempt to build surveillance states, citizens will build digital tunnels to escape it.