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Let's Play Video Games for Good

We have given video games a bad name for so long: we have blamed video games for the brutal violence our society has to live with; we have criticized video games for the discourses and (mis)representations; we have framed video games, a cultural medium, as where players losing their grip on reality. Though all of which is not true, it almost seems like we have said and heard enough about what bad video games may do to the way we act and behave in the world. For that we keep dissing video games and the violence in video games as something solely negative to the development of our society—we are taking an outdated approach—we may go backward from the world's trend. We should not go against the flow. How about we play video games?

In this generation, playing video games is simply seen as nothing bad, or at least not-that-bad, while its industry is booming. According to a report by gaming analytics firm Newzoo, the global video and electronic games market will generate \$152.1 billion in 2019, up 9.6% over last year, and global revenues from esports will very likely hit \$1.1 billion in 2019, up 27 percent since last year (Wijiman par. 4). Economic development is important for further development of society in competition with others, so spending on video games and video games related activities such as esports champions series is encouraged, as we can see how trending playing video games is in the media today.

In the media, the global image and lifestyles of famous video gamers have been praised with their medals and net worth. Famous video gamers and esports champions have the most followers on digital platforms these days and are role models for young people around the world. For instance, this year, PewDiePie, a college dropout, twenty-nine years old, became the first individual YouTube creator to hit 100 million subscribers with his home-made *Let's Play* videos. Also, this year, Kyle Giersdorf, a sixteen-year-old, won \$3 million taking the Fortnite World Cup prize (Bumbaca). Therefore, it is clear that more and more people will play video games, more and more people will experience the diverse, yet complex, emotions created from playing.

The emotions while playing video games experienced by a player results not only in the in-game space but also in the space of which the player conjointly defines. These emotions at play are experienced and made possible within the context of the playing video game in situations of interaction—social and spatial. These experiences link to the player's past and present involvement and hold meaning for players to interpret in relation to other activities in their lives. In easier words, what is lived within the game, also depends on what is lived in the physical space of the player. So, whether the content of the video game we play is violent or not, PG or not, we are never video game players who live in gameplay only, we are the one who interprets what's good for ourselves in life (Minassian 47-62).

Video games, thus, are a potential platform not only for interaction but ultimately for education which we can learn from. When we play video games, we are in active mode—we are forced to think quickly to act. Our video gaming practices require us to constantly review our actions, process information and analyze events to create future decisions. Therefore, the design of the game has the potential for educational uses. Video games are one more platform for us to create spaces for interaction with one another to learn together (Kim et al., 182-192).

The conversation regarding the link between playing video games and violent acts seems to be never ending. This kind of conversation is best taken as a reminder that game design has influence over players' emotions and that game design matters. We should never leave the conversation or mute it—we need to stay in order to support, argue, and guide the chat toward certain direction that we think is good. Therefore, amid the growing concerns and risks for individual agency over “the digital world,” digital governmentality and big data, we should all play video games. Playing video games does not mean we choose to be detached from what's going on, but, instead, we are learning about our society.

Works Cited

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