



PERSUASIVE QUALITIES OF GAMES AS AN ARTISTIC MEDIUM WITH A SOCIAL FUNCTION

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ABSTRACT

People who are not in the game world often comment that they will numb players, rob them of any sense of empathy and create a generation of isolated and antisocial loners. In this article we will try to affirm the opposite: that games can play a powerful role in the creation of empathy, as well as other positive emotional experiences thanks to their own structural processes and how this empathy is the necessary one to make up for the lack of involvement of society in artistic creation. We will deal with the persuasive properties of games as media and what differentiates them from other media. Also, we will explain what these qualities of the games can bring to the activist and social art.

1. Introduction

Eometimes work is more fun than entertainment itself. Perhaps this sounds somewhat absurd, but when we talk about games it is measurable and demonstrable thanks to a psychological method of research known as experience sampling method (ESM). The experience sampling method is a research methodology that encourages participants to stop at certain moments of an activity and take notes of their experience in real time.

Psychologists use this type of method to know how we are during different parts of the day. Activities are interrupted at random times with a text message and participants are encouraged to answer two questions: what they are doing and how they are doing at that moment. One of the most common findings of this type of research is that almost everything we think is fun is, in fact, slightly depressing. Virtually all the activities that we would describe as relaxed fun (watching TV, eating chocolate, shopping, or partying) do not make us feel better. In fact, they make us feel less motivated, less safe and less involved in general (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990, Csikszentmihalyi & Kubey, 1981, Csikszentmihalyi & Lefevre, 1989, Kubey, Larson, & Csikszentmihalyi, 1996). These activities act as a patch, make us move from anxiety and stress to boredom and depression, they do not make us feel better because they do not actively involve us, we are just a passive agent of these.

Therefore, as we said earlier, sometimes work is more fun than leisure itself and avoid passive leisure and find a hard and difficult fun to do (hard fun) or hard work that we are passionate about, will challenge us to excel and, consequently, we will feel better having achieved a goal.

Hard and difficult fun is what happens when we experience positive stress or eustress.

From the psychological and neurological point of view, eustress is essentially identical to the negative stress (the common one): we produce adrenaline, our reward system is activated and the blood supply increases to the attention control centres of the brain. What is fundamentally different is our state of mind. When we fear failure, danger or when pressure comes from an external agent, extreme neurochemical activation does not make us happy. It makes us feel angry and combative, or even want to escape the world. This can lead to compulsive behaviours such as eating, smoking, or taking drugs.

However, during the eustress, we are not experiencing fear or pessimism as we are generating a stressful situation on purpose, therefore, we are safe and in a positive attitude.

Hard and difficult diversions make us feel better than before doing them due to the intrinsic rewards that they entail, therefore, it is understandable that

games are one of the activities that report better mood during and after their practice in the reports of ESM. (Gregory, 2008)

Games do not feed our appetite for extrinsic rewards, they do not give us titles or money. However, games fill us with intrinsic rewards, they actively involve us in a rewarding job in which we have the opportunity to be competent. They also give us a highly structured and complex way to spend time and build links with the people we love. And, if we play for enough time, we will be part of something much bigger than ourselves, part of a community or a project.

2. Procedural Rhetoric

Games are persuasive thanks to their procedural rhetoric: set of methods by which ideas and messages are broadcast covertly during the process of a game. The word rhetoric has its origin in the ancient Greek where its root was oratory. Therefore, procedural rhetoric is closely linked to the eloquence of telling facts in a convincing way.

3. Persuasive Elements of Games

Next, we will detail the different persuasive elements of the games until arriving at the essential element that takes place thanks to the convergence with the social art.

3.1. Interactivity - meaningful choices - empowerment / control - consequences

We could say that the biggest difference between games and other popular forms of entertainment is interactivity. To play is to establish a dialogue between the player and the game. With movies, series, literature, theatre or almost anything else, the flow of information is unidirectional. When you watch a movie or read a novel, you are not participating in a dialogue, you are listening to a monologue.

Interactivity is, by definition, a process that demands user activation. We make a move in the game, either a roll of dice, press a button on a command or move a chip; this information is received by the game and transforms it into other information that returns to us. This new information provides the context for our next movement. Our actions influence the game and the game influences our actions (as well as the other players) in a chain of cause and effect.

Therefore, games are non-linear and open, offering players to move freely through their structure and make meaningful choices to reach a variety of different possible destinations.

Making active decisions is closely related to creative work. When we actively make decisions,

we are modelling the "stage" to our liking and we are proud of something we have done and achieved. For every creative effort we make, we feel more capable than when we started.

Otherwise, these significant choices also make us control and feel responsible for the consequences of our actions.

If our actions do not affect the state of the game, or each action has the same effect, the game does not make sense. We are no longer navigating freely in a system of norms; we are simply performing a sequence of empty gestures. (Upton, 2015, p.59)

As a result, we can extract that games as they are interactive offer the player to choose their own path, that is, make meaningful choices that place them in the centre of control of the situation and responsible for the consequences of their actions.

3.2. Challenges: uncertainty, but predictability - curiosity - restlessness

Games offer us challenges to challenge ourselves. The thrill of overcoming obstacles as we reach goals within a game makes us feel a deep sense of accomplishment. The more challenging the game is, the stronger the feeling of satisfaction when we finally get over it. Therefore, uncertainty in games is necessary.

Uncertainty is not usually a good thing, in most cases. At least in the developed world we pay taxes to reduce uncertainty: the risk of invasion, insecurity of terrorism, the risks created by unemployment... The reality is that we face uncertainty throughout our lives and part of our effort as a society is put in reducing it.

The games reflect that reality in a fictitious and non-threatening way, a positive uncertainty. The concern to discover what is going to happen is part of the absorbing and striking of games. However, if a game is predictable it is very likely that the game in question will stop drawing our attention, as Greg Costikyan shows in his book *Uncertainty in Games* (2013):

Consider, for example, the game of *The Three in a Row*. Unless you've lived in a Skinner box from an early age, you have to know that the outcome of the game is absolutely safe. Whoever goes first will put the first chip in the central square, because occupying it is advantageous, unless a player is naive or stupid, the players will avoid winning by blocking any attempt to get three in a row. It is a resolved game, and trivial, and nobody beyond a certain age can play it with pleasure, because there is no uncertainty about the development of the game. (Costikyan, 2013, p.10)

There are different types of uncertainty but in this article, we will only explain the one that we think is most important for our study: Malaby's semiotic continuity.

This type of uncertainty suggested by Malaby (2007) corresponds to the unpredictability of the mechanics of a game because it acts in a way that is deliberately different from what was established in our previous knowledge. The purpose of this type of mechanics is to put the player on alert. This state of alert is what awakens the shock state of social art to which the philosopher Walter Benjamin and the playwright Bertolt Brecht refer, as we will see later in this article. An example is *Train* (Brathwaite, 2009). *Train* is a board game in which players carry small yellow meeples in train cars. The objective of the game is to move those trains to their destination with as many passengers as possible. Only when a train arrives at its destination is the nature of that destiny revealed; All those passengers are called to the Nazi extermination camps, and consequently, the players are taking them to their death. This epiphany completely changes the meaning of the game for the players, creating a real and disturbing emotional impact (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Brenda Brathwaite. *Train*, 2009.



Source: provided by the author

Semiotic uncertainty is not a common feature of many games, but it is a common element in games created from a social artistic perspective.

3.3. Feedback

The feedback system tells players how close they are from reaching the goal. These are measures that give the player some knowledge about her position and her progress in the game.

It can take the form of points, levels, progress bar., etc. Or, in its most basic form, the feedback system can be as simple as the players' knowledge of an objective result. Real-time feedback serves as a promise to players that the goal is achievable and provides motivation to continue playing.

3.4. *Acceptance to failure and error*

Every day, millions of people around the world play games, and most of them will experience failure while playing. It is safe to say that human beings have a fundamental desire to succeed and feel competent, but when they play they have chosen to participate in an activity in which they are almost certain to fail and feel incompetent, at least part of the time. In fact, we know that players prefer games in which they fail.

If every action in a game inevitably leads us to victory, the idea of having made a meaningful choice collapses. To create a sense of play in a goal-oriented space, it is essential that you are presented with the opportunity to choose wrong or fail. The possibility of failure is central to our gaming experience.

To understand this paradox of failure, we will offer the vision of the Jesper Juul. Juul's argument rests on the feeling of ineptitude and the need for it to overcome failure. When you fail in a game you feel that you are inept. Such a feeling of inadequacy is unpleasant for us, and it is strange that we choose to submit to it. However, even though the failure is inherent in the games and with it the feeling of incompetence, it also motivates us to play more to escape from it, and the feeling of escaping from failure (often by improving our skills) is fundamental for the enjoyment of the games. The games promise us a fair chance to redeem ourselves. This distinguishes the failure of the game from failure in our lives. The games are designed in such a way that they give us a fair chance, whereas the real world does not make such promises. (Juul, 2013) The error proves that there is something deficient in us and that we can improve it, the games give us the opportunity to do it and to see the failure as a learning opportunity. Only when we feel responsible for our failure (which we do not like) can we feel responsible for overcoming this failure (which we like) and achieve success and satisfaction.

As Juul (2013) comments, this paradox is governed by the same parameters as the paradox of painful art:

1. People do not look for situations that arouse painful or sad emotions.
2. People have sad and painful emotions in response to a certain art.
3. People look for art that they know will awaken sad or painful emotions.

It is a way to experience emotions that have a bad connotation (or painful) without direct consequences because they are outdated and transient. That is, you fail, but you have another attempt. Somebody dies, but he is a fictional character. As we will see later, pain is a very common strategy in social art, Walter Benjamin's shock often produces pain, as him-self says about Brecht's epic plays. "The ideal of experience that

makes up the shock is catastrophe." (Benjamin, 2005, p.514)

Therefore, while success may please us for having understood the game system, failure gives us the opportunity to consider why we have failed. Therefore, failure has a very specific positive effect in making us see new details and depths of reading in the work of art that we have before us.

3.5. *Sociability: the feeling of being in community*

As we have said before, the state in which we find ourselves when we play requires a certain intrinsic motivation to keep us in the activity. In this way, when we feel strong will and motivation we attract other people close to us.

Since ancient times, playing with others has always required an individual effort to collaborate. This is true for dice games, card games, chess, sports, or any other type of multiplayer game we can imagine. Each multiplayer game begins with a cooperation agreement. Players accept to play with the same rules and value the same objective. This establishes a common plan to work together.

Games provide us with a platform to create community and to discourage the individualized sense of the current human being; unlike reality, where loneliness and isolation predominates.

As the extensive research of Jane McGonigal (2009) testifies, the sense of collectivity and sociability is innate to games and happens repeatedly in the different dimensions of games.

Collaboration is a special way of working together. It requires three different types of concerted effort: cooperate (act purposefully towards a common goal), coordinate (synchronize efforts and share resources), and co-create (produce a new result together). This third element, co-creation, is what distinguishes collaboration from other collective efforts: it is a fundamentally generative act. Collaboration is not just about achieving an objective or joining forces; it's about creating something together that would be impossible to create just alone. (McGonigal, 2012, p.268)

Therefore, a union occurs when you want to play a game, the desire to share that moment with someone is what causes part of the fun. As a second instance: joining forces, feeling that you share goals with other people and that their achievement also depends on your help and vice versa. And finally, the co-creation of shared knowledge (usually in a community).

As Jane McGonigal comments in her TED Talk 2010, in games you never feel alone or unnecessary, you always have a responsibility and a utility:

Whenever you appear in one of these online games especially in World of Warcraft, there are lots and lots of different characters willing to immediately entrust you with a mission that saves the world. But not any mission, but a mission that perfectly matches the current level of one in the game, right? So, one can do it. They never give you a challenge that you cannot achieve. But it is at the limit of what one is capable of. So, one has to make an effort. But there is no unemployment in World of Warcraft. There is no such thing as sitting down to squeeze your hands. There is always something specific and important to do. And there are also a lot of collaborators. Wherever you go, there are hundreds of thousands of people ready to work with you to achieve your epic mission. It is not something that we have in real life so easily, this feeling that in the palm of our hand there are a lot of collaborators. (McGonigal, 2010)

The pleasure of playing with others, in this way, encompasses diverse types of camaraderie, as well as empathy and companionship.

3.6. Portability

Wherever we look, the way we play is the same. While we take a few minutes to learn the rules, we can play a game that was created in Germany, Kenya, Chile or ancient Greece, and it will work properly as a game. It will contain the same mix of obstacles and possibilities as all games: the arbitrary restrictions that block easy progress, the obvious opportunities for meaningful action, the delicate balance between knowledge and uncertainty. As a beginner, we may find them strange if they are not within our usual parameters, but as we play, the experience of playing will make us feel comfortable and in a familiar environment. In fact, we will learn other parameters and thoughts from other cultures.

This is something remarkable. In many cases, cultural practices are not so portable. Most of the time, when we encounter something from an unknown culture, our initial experience is distant and uncomfortable; We cannot jump directly and participate fully.

We will use as an example the recent game *Ladrillazo* (2017), the real estate bubble game in Spain. As its website says:

Ladrillazo is a historical game that takes you to the real estate bubble of the first decade of the 21st century. There were days of wine and roses, an interpretation centre in each town, an airport in each city, mortgages at 40 years, masons with minister salaries, Olympic dreams, AVEs and resorts with golf. You will

be the intermediary, the one who convinces a couple of local mayors and builders to win the favour of the voter and take advantage of some forgotten terrains. Little by little, speculating and mortgaging, you will reach the highest political and business spheres, you will carry out pharaonic projects and your profits will be increasing... until the money of the country runs out and win the game who else has managed to hide more money. (Fernández & Pérez, 2017)

As the authors comment, it is easy to learn if you read the rules, you do not need to know the context, just understand it. And, as we have previously commented, other cultures can learn the context where the game has been created with ease just by playing it.

However, this does not mean that the complete experience of a game is identical in all situations and places where it is played. Games are cultural practices, so the meaning of a game varies according to its cultural context. But the mechanics of the game, the obstacles and the possibilities that govern the way the game develops, will work equally regardless of the cultural context. The game does not feel broken, unbalanced or unplayable, even though it was invented in a culture very different from the one being played.

The reason why games are portable is that there is a deep structure in them that transcends cultural boundaries. The mechanics of all games are curiously familiar because in order for a game to function as a game it must meet certain universal conditions.

Figure 2. Alejandro Pérez y Paco Fernández, *Ladrillazo*, 2017.



Source: provided by the author

3.7. The Magic Circle of Huizinga and the Flow of Csikszentmihalyi

The flow and the magic circle are given thanks to all the previous characteristics. Normally they are two concepts that are not directly associated but that have a very close relationship.

The magic circle, which Huizinga develops in simple form in *Homo Ludens* (2007), begins as the isolated place where a game is played.

Every game moves and has its being within a playground-delimited previously materially or ideally, deliberately or by default. Just as there is no formal difference between play and ritual, so you can not formally differentiate the 'consecrated site' from the playground. The arena, the game table, the magic circle, the temple, the stage, the screen, the tennis court, the court of justice, etc., are all in form and function: playgrounds, that means that they are forbidden places, isolated, circulated by shrubs, blessed, within which special rules are received. All are temporary worlds within the ordinary world, dedicated to the staging of a separate act. (Huizinga, 2007, p.23)

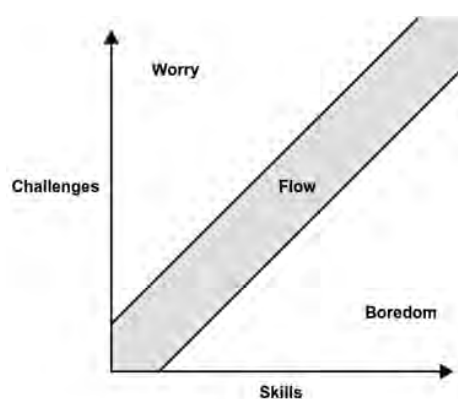
This term has been extended, among other authors, by Eric Zimmerman and Katie Salen Tekinbas in *Rules of Play: Game Design Fundamentals* (2003) and in the modern ludic study is considered, not only as a place where the game happens (e.g. the board) but also as the experience of the game where acts of the real world have special meanings. The players who enter the magic circle are transformed by the experiences that take place within it. In that way, when we play we face a reality where we encounter difficulties and when we overcome them we find catharsis.

In this way, the concept, in general terms, defines the moment in which when we get together to play we enter a space-time different from the space-time that we live daily. The magic circle creates a bubble where we enter freely and share a space excluded from the outside where we have significant experiences. And although this bubble is ephemeral, it is a fundamental concept of playful activity.

This experience of being out of reality for a moment, experiencing a single moment, reminds us of the idea of Csikszentmihalyi: the flow (1990). The flow is the condition of the "optimal experience". It is the mental state that we achieve when we get completely lost in an activity. When we experience flow, we not only lose our awareness of the outside world and time, we also lose our awareness of ourselves as distinct individuals that exist separately from the world around us.

The flow state is a challenge that requires skills. The enjoyment in an activity reaches its peak when the challenges are in fair balance with personal skills. To achieve a state of flow, a balance must be achieved between the challenge of the task and the skill of the person performing it. If the task is too easy or too difficult, the flow cannot be presented. If the task is too difficult we will enter a state of anxiety, on the contrary, if it is too easy we will fall into boredom.

Figure 3. Brian Upton, Representation of Flow state.



Source: Aesthetic of Play (Upton, 2015)

Therefore, when you enter the magic circle of a game, you tend to get a state of catharsis called the Flow state where your only goal is to overcome challenges.

3.8. Conflict and guilt: the shock of Walter Benjamin and the estrangement of Bertolt Brecht

As we discussed in the uncertainty section on the semiotic contingency of Malaby, there is a characteristic of activist or social art games: conflict and guilt.

To create this feeling of guilt within the work, first, we need the mechanical unpredictability of Malaby's semiotic contingency: to put the viewer-player on alert. To understand this state of alert, not knowing what is going to happen because the parameters are outside the previously known, we need to know the idea of shock of Walter Benjamin and estrangement of Bertolt Brecht.

Since they met, Brecht and Benjamin became great collaborators in the thinking of the other. The two were joined by their Marxist position (Brecht more deterministic and Benjamin less orthodox) and they spent long hours talking about the crisis of culture and the need to restore its initial function: to educate in critical thinking. (Polgovsky, 2012)

Brecht's techniques for interruption and juxtaposition in the practice of epic theatre were closely related to the use of Benjamin's montage as a mechanism to "liberate" meaning. Despite Theodor Adorno and Gershom Scholem's attempt to place Benjamin's thought in a different aesthetic tradition, Brecht's understanding of *Verfremdung* (estrangement) and Benjamin's idea of shock are often considered identical.

The estrangement, and the shock, have their beginning in the epic theatre of Bertolt Brecht. Brecht is often considered the theorist and the most radical practitioner of twentieth-century theatre. He rebelled against the classic "theatre of illusion" or what he called "Aristotelian drama", a theatre that conjures before the public an illusion of real events,

attracting each member of the public to action "by making her identify with the hero-protagonist to the point of complete self-forgetfulness of her being." (Esslin, 1960, p.30) The theatre of illusion serves to purge the emotions of the audience but leaves it without knowledge and without tools. It turns art into a consumer item and destroys its potential to become a laboratory for social change.

The centre of Brechtian thought is the insistence that the public develop a non-conformist attitude in front of the work, an openly political position. Brecht saw apolitical art as the badge of art that favoured the ruling classes. In this way he created the epic theatre, which he later wanted to call "dialectical" or "scientific". Brecht described it that way in the mid-30s:

The scenario began to be instructive... Oil, inflation, war, social struggles, family, religion, wheat, the meat market, all became themes of theatrical representation... that the "real world" came to the front of the stage for the activity of the people to be subject to criticism... the theatre became a matter of philosophers, but only for philosophers who wished not only to explain the world but also to change it. (Brecht & Willett, 1964, p.71)

The purpose of the epic theatre was to portray both individuals and social reality and make them see that they were capable of being "reassembled" and this had to be achieved through estrangement. According to Ernst Bloch, the estrangement of Brecht is directed against the state of alienation that results from the reification of social relations in advanced capitalist societies. As people become oblivious to their environmental and personal environment, as their lives and work are reduced to the status of commodity, they lose their ability to hear and see. Therefore, for a social change to occur, said Bloch, these people had to be awakened. (Bloch, Halley, & Suvin, 1970)

To this term that Brecht called estrangement, Benjamin used to call it shock and not only spoke of it in his writings but transported it to the style of writing them. It often hits the reader by juxtaposing ideas and presenting extremely short arguments. His aphoristic writing structures the text as a montage of quotations without open correspondence between them. This allows the creation of multiple associations between written fragments and leaves the text open for innovative and "liberating" interpretations. In this sense, Benjamin's writings embody his vision of history as an object of construction. Benjamin defined shock in this way:

Materialist historiography underlies a constructive principle. [...] When the thinking suddenly stops in a particular constellation that is saturated with tensions, a shock is produced by which it crystallizes as a monad. [...] In this structure recognizes the sign of a

messianic arrest of the occurrence, or, said otherwise, a revolutionary opportunity within the struggle for the past oppressed. And he perceives it to make jump a whole specific time regarding the homogenous course of the history. (Benjamin, 2008, pp. 316-317)

In both cases, shock / estrangement appears as an aesthetic practice to free art from the enslaving and exploitative dynamics of mercantile capitalism. For both, Benjamin and Brecht, shock destroys perception and exposes the discontinuity of history. However, Benjamin's treatment of shock goes far beyond Brecht's optimism. While Brecht embraced the shock with absolute conviction, for Benjamin it implies great dangers: the probable appearance of a mass of traumatized automatons, the disappearance of private space; the arrival of an era in which experience, devoid of tradition, is unable to find meaning. (Polgovsky, 2012)

This sense of shock / estrangement is what we want to rescue to transport it to our object of study. Artistic games created with a social or political purpose keep the viewer in a state of suspense, of uncertainty, which keeps her aware of what she is doing, interpreting her actions from different points of view. The player-spectator is in a privileged position, this time they are the ones who move the story, those who decide where they are going. Moreover, games have a more direct relationship with the public than the works of Brecht's epic theatre. And suddenly, there is a shock, an "unexpected but expected" event. This eternal "pleasant discomfort" caused by this type of games is based on the absolute insistence on the conflict and the awakening of the feeling of guilt in the player.

This ability to evoke real guilt feelings from a fictional experience is unique to the activist games. A reader or a viewer can feel many emotions when they are presented with horrendous acts of fiction on the page or on the screen, but responsibility and blame are usually not among them. At most, they may feel an uncomfortable collusion sensation. (Isbister, 2016, pp. 8-9)

In some way, this shock is breaking with the usual magic circle that transports it to an unusual state of flow, where tension is the maximum exponent. The magic circle would continue to exist, but this time the player would be aware of it and transfer its knowledge to external reality.

The conflict in *Train*, the game we talked about earlier (see figure 1), lies in the situation of not knowing until the end where the trains are going to stop and, as in *September 12* (2001) in which you must kill the terrorists, but in turn innocent citizens die, in the choice of the player about where the good is and where the evil is.

4. Conclusion

As we have seen, the games have certain requirements and emancipatory characteristics with respect to the rest of the artistic media:

Interactivity - meaningful choices - empowerment / control - consequences: Games, by nature, demand user activation in order to make sense. They are non-linear and open, which allows players to make meaningful decisions that give them control over the situation and, in turn, feel responsible for the consequences of their actions. The information fluid in a game is bidirectional. Therefore, we are able to direct history and control it, that is why games are different from the rest of artistic forms to talk about social problems.

Challenges: uncertainty, but predictability - curiosity - restlessness: Games offer us challenges to challenge ourselves. Uncertainty causes tension when facing a challenge, however, this uncertainty must be accompanied by the ability to be predicted but not obviously. Therefore, games place us at the centre of the action and motivate us to overcome ourselves with challenges, this makes us aware that we are necessary for social change.

Feedback: Games provide constant feedback on our actions, this gives us motivation to move forward and understand that the goal is achievable. Therefore, they make us feel unique and capable of changing things, like Brecht's epic theatre.

Acceptance to failure and error: We live in the era of success and competition. They have not taught us that failure is a big part of the human being. However, to advance in games we must fail continuously and try again. If every action in a game led to victory, the idea of having made a meaningful election would disappear. The conception of humanity would change if we learned to accept our own and others' mistakes.

Figure 4. Newsgaming.com, September 12, 2001.



Sociability: the feeling of feeling in community: The will and self-motivation to play attracts other players, as well as the desire to share that moment with someone is what causes part of the fun. So, from the beginning, an effort is required to collaborate, cooperate and understand that your achievements require the effort of others. In games you never feel alone because you always have a responsibility and usefulness. Therefore, they are a tool capable of dissuading the individualized sense of the current human being.

Portables: Games have a characteristic that many other cultural practices do not have, and that is that we can use them anywhere else in the world. At the beginning it is possible that the parameters are strange to us, but as we play we will even learn other parameters and thoughts from other cultures.

Flow and Magic Circle: The parallel space-time in which the games are developed produces what Huizinga called the Magic Circle (a series of conditions that make you forget real life). In this Magic Circle a sensation very similar to the one that explains Csikszentmihalyi is experienced: the state of Flow. The Flow is the state of maximum performance of a person, it is when the players enter this state that they are having a significant practice and are transformed by the experiences that take place within it.

Conflict and guilt: This characteristic is typical of activist / social art games and tries to shake the magic circle of the games, positioning the viewer in the face of a very unexpected situation generating in her a sense of guilt and responsibility for what is happening.

Therefore, as Jane McGonigal (2012) well says in her essay to explain how games make us better and how they can change the world, we must raise and see the characteristics of games as emancipatory elements:

When we know what it really means to play a good game, we can stop reminding each other: This isn't a game. We can start actively encouraging people instead: This *could* be a game. (McGonigal, 2012, p.34)

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