

Videogames, Violence and Aggressive Behavior: an Educational Proposal

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ABSTRACT

This contribution, articulated in three parts, proposes an articulated interpretation of the relationship between violence and videogames. The debate, nevertheless current, is in fact rich in positions diametrically opposite and often accompanied by superficial and not much argued visions which make parents, teachers and media suspicious. The dialogue and communication with youngsters and with the industry is connoted by a communicative distance which is growing more and more.

The first part of the contribution will offer an overview taken by different disciplines (from the ethology of Lorenz to the philosophy and sociology of Morin) to describe the destructive and transformative components of the aggressiveness. Moreover, it will be talked the aggressive component in relation with the cultural dimension of the game in general with its "play" component. In the second part it will be explored the complexi-ty of the combination "Violence / Videogame" by trying to propose a critical and ana-lytical vision, that can open new spaces for questions and interpretations. In the third part, starting from some essential issues and questions concerning education (Why vio-lence in computer games is so much invasive? Does exist alternative forms of digital games narrations which don't use violence as key element for the solution of conflicts or problems in the gameplay?), it will be investigat-ed the distance between teacher's representations and prejudices/expectation about digital game, the student's experienc-es and the educative and creative potential of "media culture". Finally, in order to fur-ther explore the topic, it will be presented a media-literacy experience carried on in the framework of the European project Appyourschool about the use of non-violent video-games for developing crea-tivity and critical thinking within pre-adolescents.

Introduction

This contribution, articulated in three parts, proposes an interpretation of the relationship between violence and videogames. The debate, nevertheless current, is in fact rich in positions diametrically opposite and often accompanied by superficial and not much argued visions which make parents, teachers and media suspicious. The dialogue and communication with youngsters and with the industry is connoted by a communicative distance which is growing more and more.

The first part of the contribution will offer an overview taken by different disciplines (from the ethology of Lorenz to the philosophy and sociology of Morin), to describe the destructive and transformative components of the aggressiveness. Moreover, it will be talked about the aggressive component in relation with the cultural dimension of the game in general with its “play” component. In the second part the complexity of the combination “Violence / Videogame” will be explored, by trying to propose a critical and analytical vision that can open new spaces for questions and interpretations. In the third part, starting from some essential issues and questions concerning education (Why violence in computer games is so invasive? Do alternative forms of digital games narrations, which don’t use violence as key element for the solution of conflicts or problems in the game play, exist?), the distance between teacher’s representations and prejudices/expectation about digital game, as well as the student’s experiences and the educative and creative potential of “media culture”, will be investigated. Finally, in order to further explore the topic, a media-literacy experience carried on in the framework of the European project *Appyourschool* about the use of non-violent videogames for developing creativity and critical thinking within pre-adolescents, will be presented.

Aggression and Violence

The majority of adults’ fear, that their children will become violent because of videogames. Others fear that a predisposition to aggressive behavior will be the determining cause in choosing a violent videogame on the part of teenagers.

However, in order to understand the complexity of this phenomenon, before even analyzing it in specific technological terms, the reflection needs probably to be investigated within the frame of games and the context that is established with the ones interacting with that very context (Watzlawick, Bevelas, & Jackson, 1967).

If this link really exists, we should first of all ask ourselves if aggression and the complexity that characterizes the aggressive behavior are connected to the predisposition of the subject choosing violence in the “virtuality” and if, at the same time, using videogames represents the incentive to break the taboo of violence, and the diffusion of violent behaviors within real contexts.

Common thought associates the diffusion of deviant behaviors with the use of videogames and it contributes to the spread of the misconception that the boy or

girl playing videogames is the most inclined to act violently. Consequently, games are tools always far and distant from those who work in educational environments, particularly in schools. In doing so, aren't we however constructing simplistic opinions and reinforcing common sense that justifies the relationship between videogames and violence while giving an interdependent and inevitable definition?

In this contribution, we will try to understand some reasons explaining this binary combination and tackle some "systematic" cultural issues (Bateson, 1972).

Aggression, just like other factors of life, appears as a pre-cultural dimension and has contributed to the socio-biological organization of subjects. Ethologists (Eibl Eibesfeldt, 1977; Lorenz, 1969; Tinbergen, 1963) identify its "spontaneous" component as the ability to produce positive social and biological effects on a community.

According to Lorenz, the aggressive impulse does not have to be interpreted as "a diabolic fact or as the destructive principle", nor as the force "that wants always the evil and creates the good", but as a valid instrument at the service of life, on which the "flower of personal friendship and love" (Lorenz, 1963, p. 65) is based. The territorial organization between species, the development of primary emotions such as fear and aggression have prepared an evolution in the research for collective shelters or in survival, albeit never being a gratuitous act but rather functional to specific collective needs with the aim of conserving instead of destroying the species. Therefore, thanks to the ethologists' contribution, we can engage in a reflexive work allowing to, debunk the preconceived ideas that historically define the aggressive act within the instinctive behavior sphere and, at the same time, enhance a symbolic and cultural dimension determining the polysemic meaning of aggression.

Moreover, along with the specific regulatory functions (Hacker, Fromm, Morin have then widened the field of research on the cultural and biological interdependence), aggression covers the structural characteristics defined also as integral part of the game dynamic: starting from the threshold between imagination and action-realization, to the relationship between reality and its representation that improves the recreational activities.

Its "spontaneous" component, acceding to an elaboration on the cognitive and relational level, does not necessary lead the subject, to "do something bad to

14 someone else”, but it can also be structured as an experimental space where every subject can experience aggression.

In other words, its dynamism and its creativity define the variable of a communicative context that can influence the meaning of the very context itself and, at the same time, be transformed by it (Morin, 1973). This reflection led to an important realization that, thinking again at the introduction of the text, redefines the aggressive component in a context that does not necessarily determine the aspects of immutability and/or irreversibility.

The well-known scientist Gregory Bateson, interested in the nature of games as a form of meta-communication, has tried to define the ambivalence of some behaviors in the paradoxical experience proposed by the recreational context.

“The message does not consist of the objects that it denotes (the word cat cannot scratch us). This is also what happens in games: “game” actions are linked to other “non-game” actions, as you will encounter examples of signals that stand for other events. It is therefore clear that the evolution of games might have been an important step in the evolution of communication.” (Bateson, 1972, p. 222)

The power of this intuition implies that, if I act aggressively in a controlled symbolic context, I can negotiate its meaning, experience its ambivalences and try to live the contradictions that “naturally” distinguish us and I can help realizing its cultural meaning (Morin, 1973). This is an important step if we want to avoid the trap of being either in favor or against videogames and if we see videogames as generators of interpretations and significations of reality and experience.

However, it is undeniable that – and we do not want to underestimate the issue – aggression implies a number of human problems whose origin and consequences are grounded in fractures and dramatic social results that the subjects have engendered at the level of evidence and socio-cultural experience (war, gender violence, xenophobia, intolerance, radicalism, fundamentalism...). The actual scenario is our witness and it is certainly not reassuring.

The philosopher of education G. M. Bertin, in these terms, gives an interesting interpretation and defines the extension of behavioral dimension as “hypertrophic

tendency" (Bertin, 1981), which, at a certain time in human history, has engendered a violence expansion in society.

Violence is once more defined as a cultural component that can increase or decrease, change and transform itself on different levels – normative, social, cultural, political – in relation with contexts.

However, if on the one hand this definition suggests the risks contained in the most extreme expression of aggression, on the other hand, it refers to the possibility of its contrary and therefore to the alternatives to war, intolerance and the reduction of its realizations.

At the same time, we cannot exclude a priori that the area of virtual games will never contribute to the expansion of aggressive behavior and to violence in general. However, because of the "regulatory" and cultural components engendered, we cannot exclude the possibility that the virtual, under the conditions that define it as a "good videogame", offers safe environments while creating a narrative frame where players "try" to live reality and its ambivalences.

Interaction and Components of Violence in Videogames

Video games and violence are two often associated terms: during the last years many researches tried to investigate the relationship between the consumption of digital games and violent behavior. The various approaches from different researchers polarize fundamentally in two main streams: on one side there are all the studies which, by applying maybe in a too much of simplified way the Bandura's Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1978), try to show that the fact of being exposed to violent scenes can generate into the public a drive of more or less unconscious emulation (Kirsh, 1998); on the other side one can find studies which approach the subject from a diametrically opposite point of view, that is, try to show that violent videogames are mainly used by violent people (Anderson & Bushman, 2001; Bartholow, Bushman, & Sestir, 2006).

The report *Summary of Violent computer games and aggression – an overview of the research 2000-2011*, published by the Swedish Media Council (2012), offers a transversal analysis of many researches and experiments concerning the topic in exam. The report states that it's not possible to demonstrate a cause-effect

16 relationship between videogames and violent behavior mainly because of the vagueness of the different methodological approaches guilty of not considering enough aspects such as social contexts, or the complexity of the phenomenon.

Videogame is, in fact, a medium whose target seeks entertainment, leisure and wants to be challenged. Game developers need to sell, and often the easiest way is the most effective one: violence is therefore strongly connected to its same gasoline that keeps the engine walking. It's sufficient to think of the most common classification systems out in the market: first person shooters (like *Doom* or *Wolfenstein* saga), third person action-adventure-shooters (like the *Uncharted* saga, *Tomb Raider* saga, *NiER Automata*), hack' n slash (like *Diablo*), beat'em up (*Street Fighter*, *Tekken*, *Mortal Kombat*), are all types of game in whom it is necessary, in order to advance, to eliminate physically the enemies, who are there to prevent the player from reaching his/her goal, by means of gun power or swords or kicks and fists, This mechanisms is so rooted that it is also found in apparently less violent games: role-playing games, platforms, certain drive simulation games, even in some puzzle-games.

Conflict, in most of these contexts, assumes even the role of narrative engine and it's perfectly integrated in the storytelling of the adventures: one can say that it is thanks to the violence that it is possible to build up and to solve, in a more or less elaborated way, the challenges in the game. Conflicts are considered, also by the world of fairytales and literature, as proper narrative trope and topos: the clash between good and evil, between cleverness and strength, between what it's legit and what's not (Triberti & Argenton, 2015).

However, it is important to acknowledge that in this scenario the main problematic is the representation of the violence, given by the context and the meaning of the violent actions showed. We aren't speaking about the difference between jumping over a mushroom and crush the skull of a demon with a shotgun, but the way in which the violent actions are shown in their context, about the message behind them and in the way in which such actions are handled.

In the field of social psychology, many are the studies which show that the way violence is represented, more or less justified (Paik & Comstock, 1994), punished or rewarded by the social context (Ballard & Lineberger, 1999), is an important factor which influences the probability of emulation of violent acts among the observers.

According to Ferguson, there would be a difference in terms of the impact on the player between a violent act where the character-victim suffers from a deplorable or immoral act, and two characters challenging each other into a ring or an arena (Ferguson, 2010).

In addition to the contextual elements and representation issues that, as already summarized before, they make difficult to identify a unique and unambiguous shape of violence in videogames, another crucial element to include in the discussion in order to better understand the effects of violence in videogames is whom the public is composed of and the way with which this violence is perceived.

If it is true that the content classification systems, such as the European PEGI or American ESRB, are indications designed to help users identifying the titles more suitable for specific age-ranged targets, it is as much true that often these indications are completely ignored as the youngest are attracted by games conceived for more mature players (Aroldi et al., 2012). But why violence attracts so much the players? The components that contribute to provide an answer to this question come from different domains of research like, example given, the theories which associate this attraction with the fact that players are fascinated by an esthetics of the destruction (Allen & Greenberg, 1978), or that they look for pleasure by new experiences which they cannot live in the reality (Cloninger, 1987). An additional point of view is the fact that confrontation with violent situations, can lead the spectators-players, to an empathic mechanism with the victim and of contempt towards the executioner (Zillmann, 1998).

Among the various manners to perceive violence one must not forget the cathartic component of the outburst acts that makes possible to the player to set up protected spaces, in this case the a "safe" digital environment, where it's possible to amuse and live small moments of carnival and of un-harmful rash, relief and experiment new and different roles (Sloterdijks, 1983), or where one can experiment other identities and confront himself with different scales of values.

It is because of this dynamic that the player does not always feel positive emotions if exposed to violent situations, but he may experience any kind of emotions in the spectrum: frustration, guilt, pleasure, relief, fear... and he may identify himself differently with the characters involved in the scene.

There are also examples of use of very special video games which may influence, in our opinion, the way the users perceive violence. It's the case of speedrun-gaming and gameplay-react such as blind-run or competitive game plays: different "YouTube genres" among the most successful, popular, and rewarding.

It is about videos, or in some cases entire YouTube Channels, where recordings of the gameplay of certain videogames completed in the least amount of time or with spectacular and very difficult actions are uploaded. In this case the game becomes a challenge against time, a challenge against other players and against oneself, where the only thing which counts is to show to the web the level of technical finesse: all aspects concerning violence or pleasure inducted by the vision of the violent acts seems to disappear or to be forgotten.

Different is the case of the gameplay-react: here one can find gameplay sessions accompanied by vocal or video comments in an angle of the screen. It's very common to find youtubers, sometimes real celebrities of the Web, which play with very difficult or extremely scary and violent games with the purpose to show their own reactions. In this case the exposure with this kind of scenes, that can be also violent acts assumes quite a new function: an aggregative one, that Henry Jenkins would call *participative culture*.

Watching and sharing these videos may ignite on-line discussions, composed by comments and exchanges both in offline and online contexts: using James Paul Gee's words (Gee, 2003) we can say that here we call in cause the external grammars of the semiotic field of the video game as medium. In other words, a network of relational and learning exchanges that burst out around the act of play, and it's important to remind that they are almost never isolated, but rather always accompanied by socialization, digital or non-digital.

Seen all that we summarized up to here, it's easy to notice the difficulty in finding an unambiguous correspondence between violence and videogames: the effects on the public are multiple because the public is multiple, because the different forms of violence's representation are multiple and because multiple are the ways of reading and perceive these representations.

Nevertheless, one should not be deceived by all these considerations: it's necessary to remember that the media universe which surrounds everyone, put in

synergy with our experiences, our socio-cultural and economic context, influence our way of thinking ecologically and produce social change: a change that it is produced of, and at the same time influences, our representations of the world itself.

Not considering the relationship between aggressive and violent behavior and virtual experiences driven by digital games in the pedagogical debate would mean neglecting an important ethical requirement and, with it, other contradictory and complexities which need to be questioned and taken in consideration.

Which Questions Videogames Bring to Education?

From all the stimuli set so far, some questions arise about which maybe is necessary to start reflecting on: “Why is violence in computer games so much invasive?”, “Is it really necessary to introduce some violence in a videogame to make it a good title?”, “Do alternative forms of digital game narrations which don’t use violence as key element for the solution of conflicts or problems in the gameplay exist?”.

Of course, there are virtuous examples which show other ways of conceiving videogames: game developers that don’t put violence at the core of the gameplay. Games such as *Unravel*, *Portal*, *What Remains of Edith Finch* or the old classic *Monkey Island Saga*, are only few examples of titles which broke the equation “good game = violent game”.

The formal education system, adults with educational roles and video-game developers have the duty to face this problem in an open way that goes towards a direction of media literacy and critical behavior. Families should make more efforts in filtering the titles for their children and mediate more their gaming practices, also by playing together with them. Schools should open their doors to this powerful medium, powerful for the cognitive-emotional exercise which some titles set up, and to try hard to hold open a dialogue with the youngest that may enable them to read in a more aware and critical way this medium in its mechanics, in its languages and in the historical context which represents and into whom it is placed.

Videogames, among all the available media, seem to be the last taboo of the school : recently social networks have gained their place in the educational discourse due to the evidence of fundamental citizenship issues that increasingly are

20 passing through post, sharing and tweet (in order to give an example, it's sufficient to think about the hate speech online)

This medium remains the great unknown by teachers which often do not appreciate them, understand them and which often think about them as something questionable by the families: "what will parents say when they'll know that at school we work with videogames?". The gates are barely open and only to those games which are strictly related to some educational topics, but they are completely shut for those titles which are composed by complex narratives, more difficult to decode, that often generate complex questions: those titles that, instead, fill the free time of boys and girls. Yet teenagers are there!, in front of those screens. As an educator, retreating, means leaving them alone (and then often accusing them) in front of a whole world of meanings, narratives and new imaginaries. It means forgetting those "media-cultures" (Jacquinot-Delaunay, 2006) that help them to create their identity, which provide some keys to interpret the world. And, sometimes, displace the adults too: teenagers able to program a video game, to coordinate in group - in their free time - to achieve a common goal, to form themselves by mapping what they know and what they do not know (then look up and master it) are not seen by the educators around them.

The paradox is just around the corner: "... yes, but do the history teacher knows that you are developing a video game settled in the Middle Ages?" – "No, to him we only ask for things when we have doubts about the sources". In these few lines, witnessed directly from the writers of this contribution, it's clear that the school "unplugs" the youngsters: adults stop seeing them because they are not keen to explore their media practices; they can't open up to the unknown in order to understand with which kind of words and images this unknown will take shape; they feed prejudices, enough to extinguish amazement.

The Appyourschool Project

In videogames, more than with other media, the disjunction between practices and student's experiences is quite evident, as the shyness of the educational practices. The European project *Appyourschool* tries to bridge this distance, by testing educational ideas and hints for activities that can then be disseminated and discussed.

The project started in 2016, funded by the programme Erasmus Plus KA 2 – Strategic Partnership for Schools and it involves 8 partners across Europe: Centro Zaffiria from Italy, ERA from Czech Republic, Kuopio from Finland, Karpos from Greece, Edukaciniai Projektai from Lithuania, Fundacja Nowoczesna Polska from Poland, AENIE from Portugal, and Esenler District Education Authority from Turkey.

The main objective is to test and implement innovative methodologies and practices in the field of formal education: observing which extracurricular media practices, freely chosen by adolescents, can be brought into the school, to emphasize skills and abilities that the adult doesn't observe, capture, nor finds out, except – in most of the cases – by chance, and to reach out for those who risk school dropout.

Appyourschool project aims to create complex educational situations that challenge teachers and students alike, in line with their individual needs and expectations, and that value the media literacy competences on both sides: transporting students' extra school media practices inside the curricula, enabling so a transition from a school extern solitary consumer relation with digital knowledge into collaborative productive processes that are capable of transforming learning actions inside the school, as well as the relation between school and society, through the design and implementation of projects for the community, supporting social development and innovation at local level. The project also aims to implement new transversal methodologies that open a dialogue among students, schools and societies, promoting a development of school as place to imagine, think and test the future.

The principles of these digital ateliers, the backbone of the project, can be summarized in 9 points:

1. Research Based:

Digital Ateliers are a place where the process of discovery is welcome, where to avoid explanations and where to design concrete experiences. The classroom has to become, in this sense, a common research-community guided by questions such as: How can we do it? In how many ways can something be done?

2. ***Scientific Approach (Manzi), Design Approach (Munari):***

Teacher, writer, scientific divulgator, tv and radio author, trainer and designer: Alberto Manzi (1923-97) was a person who facilitated the emancipation of individuals and communities: discovering the world with children was probably the adventure that fascinated him the most. His Scientific Approach foresees that the adult is able to arouse in children a cognitive tension aimed at making them passionate and motivated to learn and be curious. Learning that is realized through a concatenation of experiences - and not explanations - in which children work driven by questions; doing and undoing, deconstruct and build again, where the concrete work with hands is essential.

Bruno Munari (1907-98), artist and designer, known almost everywhere, experiments workshops for children in years of great cultural changes. His Design Approach starts from its codified planning method for design (about the design and conceptualization of objects). From this method Munari has translated, thanks to his skills as an artist, this approach into an educational level by setting up a methodology that allows the development of creative design thinking in children starting from tools, techniques and materials.

3. ***Dialogue Between Digital and Manual:***

The teacher will be able to design an educational experience that starts from an ICT content (for example an app) to develop then a manual task, with real everyday tools and materials, in order to start a personal and collective research with students.

4. ***Interdisciplinarity:***

Contemporary art and installations, ICT, cultural services and common work materials will be mixed in students' and teachers' hands. Not only one discipline is involved, but all tools coming from different disciplines and subjects.

5. ***From Consumer to Inventor:***

The media content is a new space of "signification" and becomes the material of labor of the student who interacts in a divergent way. The aim is

to understand the ICT in a deep way and to be able to think and experiment new ideas.

6. Collaborative Learning:

Students work collectively within the framework of a participatory process where they work together and for a common goal. The approach is guided by Spencer Kagan's Cooperative Learning principles: Positive Interdependence, Individual Accountability, Equal Participation, and Simultaneous Interaction (Kagan, 2013).

7. Exploration of Reality:

Real life is the main topic to understand. People need to understand reality and the relationship between things, events and worlds. It's not a question of memorizing information and knowledge but it's about the possibility to experience that reality can be understood and managed.

8. Engagement:

Creative and responsible use of media can transform reality. Students will appreciate the possibility to produce something new and interact in a collaborative way.

9. Meaningfulness:

The activities need to be strictly intertwined with real everyday life's issues: in the digital atelier is important to create a link with the daily life of students, with their extra school abilities and practices.

To design a digital atelier means to focus on the act of *Educate to think* (Bertin, 1968): it's a global approach, not only focused on ICTs and technical skills. For this reason, one needs to transform students into researchers: they have to feel the need of finding answers. Teachers have to create cognitive interests to move them and to passionate them, by not giving them all the explanation but rather conceiving educational situations that put students at the center. Media and Information Literacy is fundamental: ICTs should be treated culturally, in a creative and divergent way, remarking the importance of the link between analogical and digital, of collective and participatory uses, and the engagement in society.

On the Field: Some Examples

In this section are gathered some actions that run in the framework of the *Ap-pyourschool* project: more specifically two digital ateliers which involve the use of videogames (*Brick Building Game* and *Minecraft Education*) and an initiative of teacher training with the use of a game called *Unravel*.

Title of the digital atelier	LEGO – Transforming my city
Target age	11-13
Country	Lithuania
Objectives	<p>To encourage children to learn more about constructions, buildings;</p> <p>Using different static and dynamic tools to stimulate the joy of discovery, imagination and creativity of workshop participants;</p> <p>To give children a sense that they are creators/ designers of their own city;</p> <p>To develop a wide set of skills: creativity, orientation, artistic; knowledge: mathematics, arts, history, IT;</p> <p>To make indirect suggestions to the local authorities, tourism center to make one's local city more attractive by offering new tourist routes complemented with objects of augmented reality.</p>
Software used	<p>Pixlr (telephone app): https://pixlr.com/mobile</p> <p>Brick Building Game: http://www.brickbuildinggame.com</p> <p>Lego Digital Designer: http://ldd.lego.com</p> <p>Lego 3D catalogue (app): https://www.lego.com/en-us/games/apps/lego-3-d-catalogue-c58888ace5964f41a331070846794991##sp=100</p> <p>AURASMA: https://www.aurasma.com/</p>
Topics	<p>Focusing on the elements of the building;</p> <p>Learning about 2D and 3D of objects;</p> <p>Experimentation with different building techniques – from paper to augmented reality;</p> <p>Orientating in the map;</p> <p>Exploring your own city;</p>
Brief presentation	<p>This digital atelier focuses on creating buildings, landscape by using different techniques and decorating the city (with the help of the map) with these tools in order to contribute to making it prettier, more modern and attractive to local residents and tourists.</p>

Title of the digital atelier	Minecraft museum
Target age	12-14
Country	Italy
Objectives	Discover Minecraft by connecting analogical and digital design; Working with an interdisciplinary approach about nineteenth and twentieth century's art; Encourage students to document their own experience, to understand how they learn, how they discover, how they can be autonomous in learning; Encourage students and will explain to adults what minecart is and how it works.
Software used	Minecraft Education edition
Topic covered	Students' motivation to learn and to participate; Approaching a topic in a multidisciplinary way; Foster creativity and learning through gaming.
Brief presentation	The goal of this workshop is to explore the potentialities of Cooperative Learning applied to videogames. Throughout a long and continuous interdisciplinary iter, the students investigate specific aspect connected to the nineteenth and twentieth century's art. They designed and implemented collectively a "virtual" museums with the help of the sandbox potential of Minecraft, a Microsoft online videogame that puts the players in the shoes of virtual builders able to create basically anything. Students also created some short video tutorials to explain their parents, their teachers and their peers the process behind the whole experience and some insights and tips about the world of Minecraft.

Teacher Training

Teachers also experienced videogames in training initiatives, under a creative and divergent point of view.

Starting from a very specific videogame called *Unravel*, which places the gamer into the story of a small ball of wool that goes in search of his memories, an educational experience has been designed with the intention of interweaving memories and videogames.

The woolen thread, the main character of this game, also became the analogue work tool with whom to start building one's own album of memories.

26 A thread was launched from above and fell accidentally on a sheet of paper to encourage teenagers and teachers to complete their profile, and to begin the journey from their visual identity.

The action of curling up and eluding, foreseen by the videogame, becomes an opportunity to build a network between people who have woolen threads in their hands and which intertwine with each other according to the quantity of shared memories. The final idea is the project of a collective game in the public space in which citizens can take note of their collective memory facing challenges, such as in video games, with the constraint of remaining linked to their own wool thread, and to someone else's. Individual and collective seamlessly relate to the physics of a ball of wool that can break, elongate, get stuck. The videogame thus becomes the narrative plot underlying an educational path that allows teenagers to connect the pleasure of videogaming with fundamental citizenship themes such as that of collective historical memory.

Conclusions

It's not less important, in the scope of this contribution, the role of the videogame industry; role that's often not too much considered in the debate but that it should be underlined in order to widen the interest towards problematics that are of another nature rather than cultural. Some virtuous examples have already been mentioned: but more and more are needed. Titles that don't anesthetize the imagination and the taste of the young players, but that in opposite stimulate them to think, to raise questions that show alternative manners rather than violence to solve situations or to implement fascinating stories. Those who work in the field of conflict resolution, knowledge that should be shared also from the professionals in the education field, don't work on eradicating the conflict from social exchanges, but they offer tools to the subjects, so they can transform conflicts into dialogue and opportunities of inclusion. Conflict doesn't always meant to be solved with an "act of death": violence is, according to Hannah Arendt's thought (1970), the easiest and most dumb way to solve a situation.

Thus, for the same reasons, responsible games are needed today more than ever. And with them, are needed also responsible adults, which in front of the "spectacularization of the violence" know how to accompany the young players toward

a critical reflection of its contents and towards a strengthening of the symbolic component which characterizes videogames and, with them, the violence which is represented.

In the last months of 2017, a huge debate interested the launch of a title called *Detroit: Become Human*: Quantic Dream presented a trailer where one of the androids that the player can control was victim of an episode of domestic violence to protect a young girl from his drunk father. Children's campaigners and a UK Member of the Parliament have criticized publicly the trailer for its controversial domestic abuse scene, by stating that any video game that trivializes or normalizes child abuse, neglect or domestic violence for entertainment is unacceptable.

David Cage, lead designer of Quantic Dreams, replied like so: "Would I be doing my job as a creator if I was making the game you want me to make? I don't think so - I'm creating something that I find moving and meaningful. And I think people should see the scene, play the game and see it in context to really understand it. The rule I give myself is to never glorify violence, to never do anything gratuitous. It has to have a purpose, have a meaning, and create something that is hopefully meaningful for people."

These words are very important to understand the core of the problem: as long as violence is represented gratuitously it will be a form of violence used to spectacularize and entertain the audience, but If the same violence is used to send a strong, meaningful and important message than we are in front of a total different situation.

We think that games such as *Detroit: Become Human*, where the violence is used to "condemn" violence itself, need to be promoted and spread as much as games like the ones used in the digital atelier here presented in the framework of the European Project *Appyouschool*, where the gameplay is not centered around violence but rather on creativity, contents, and engagement.

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