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**SEBASTIAN
DETERDING:**

It's a best selling techno thriller turned into a movie, which is about a demo, a semi autonomous program gaining full autonomy and using levelling systems from an MMORPG to basically turn humans into a second speaker society controlled by computers instead of the other way around. And connected to that theory is definitely led by the rise of the term or the concept gamification, somewhere around 2010 or 2011, if you follow Google search interests. The idea that you could use elements from games or game design as a kind of monosodium glutamate or crunchy flakes to edit some other stuff to make some other stuff more palatable.

And if there is one thing true to this term is that it has the heated debate from the get go. On the one hand, you have people like the ones who read, Gabe Zicherman, he says it's the best tools humanity has ever invented to create and sustain engagement in people game. On the other hand, you have people like Ian Bogus for those choice words [LAUGHTER] [INAUDIBLE], which of course is a technical term, it's a technical term in philosophy by Harry G. Frankfurt, describing people who just don't care whether what they say is true or untrue.

So when me and my colleague Stephen [INAUDIBLE] we're looking at the debate around 2011-2012, we couldn't help noticing a couple of things. First thing we noticed is-- as I said, this is a really heated debate. This is so heated that this is not just the difference of opinion, there must be something deeper underlying here than just difference of opinion. And second, while evangelizers were evangelizing, and critiques were chastising, very few people asked, well, what does the gamification even mean? What are the larger consequences, the larger ramifications of this for us as individuals living in a society where these kind of systems become more prevalent, or for us as a society? That's kind of the origin story of how this book came about. In this book, most of what I'm talking about in the first chapter, the history chapter, is basically what I'm talking about here so.

While we were digging a bit deeper in this thing, saying why this heated discourse? Why are people so angry? We found that gamification-- the gamification discourse-- is very much in the same state that the discourse around playing was in the late 1990s, when the late Bryan Smith

[INAUDIBLE] game [INAUDIBLE] play. Show of hands, anybody know the ambiguous play? OK. Show of hands who's involved in some form of game studies or game research program? Yeah, that mapping sort of makes sense, if you're into game research, you should at a certain point come across this book.

What Sutton Smith and this book basically makes the argument and then shows is that he says the reason why there hasn't been a lot of agreement about what plays and what we should do with the play is that the different disciplines of different rhetorics, different ways of framing the play that are grounded in different deeper cultural rhetorics about what plays should be and how plays should function. As it says, rhetorics of plays [INAUDIBLE] placed within broader value systems. The popular rhetorics in the listed settings, the ambiguity is that there would be seven different rhetorics, and nobody can ever agree on one.

There are these different, large scale cultural ways of thought in which we, more or less, all participate. And that's the reason why that debate never really comes really close. And in the same way, when we look at the gamification [INAUDIBLE] and say yeah, that really captures pretty well the happening here.

There is a disagreement here about what the proper plays of plain society should be to begin with about should playing games be used to begin before anything else or not? And if so, how should they be used? By whom should they be used, and for what should they be used? Because the thing that we observe, the series games of gamification with playful designs-- all these different terms, it's basically a kind of dual cultural moment.

On the one hand, games in play leave the traditional spaces that they've been confined in within our modern Western nation states and cultures. This was the leisure time of things you did together with your friends in the evening, and there were certain kinds of games. And suddenly, there were also games for learning. Suddenly, there was games for politics.

And suddenly, everybody plays. And then part of that, what you get as a response to that is that just games become more and more pervasive in everyday life, which we call dilution of culture. You see that other social actors become interested in using games and in impressing norms, and regulations, and values onto games. So suddenly, you have a big debate where people say well, games should be gender aware, and games should be more diverse, because look at what turbo misogynistic space this is.

And then you have the existing male game cultures revolting against that, as this result that

game play becomes more pervasive. Suddenly, you have a cultural discourse. Leave out for all the terrible, terrible online harassment of gamer [INAUDIBLE]. But underneath that is this underlying cultural discourse, who should be allowed to play games?

Who should games be for? Who should be able to make these decisions? So if Ian Bogost says something-- gamification is marketing bullshit as a means to capture the wild, coveted beast that is video games and to domesticate it. Games are a mysterious, magical, powerful medium. He basically says there's this nature of games.

This is how games are. They're beasts. They're this thing. And then suddenly, they try to tame and domesticate.

What he's basically saying is games belong to us, the game designers, and the gamers, and the game academics. But you marketers, please stay out of our playing fields. This is not you should lose games, which obviously forgets that games have been used for all kinds of purposes for the longest period in history.

The art game has [INAUDIBLE] and fluxes where Ian Bogost, with this game [INAUDIBLE] definitely also belongs to, or be it war gaming, which basically goes back to Sun Tzu and *The Art of War*, because Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, partially was based on the culture where samurai were taught strategy and cunning with good things of [INAUDIBLE] as a board game. So the idea that you could use games for other things than entertainment is culturally very old.

But still, we have suddenly this new cultural debate about how should we use games in society? What should their place be? And even deeper underlying that, what kind of society do we want to live in to begin with, and how do we get there?

And as we were noticing these kind of clashes of rhetorics, we found two theoreticians very useful in mapping the total debate. The first one is this very unlikely, with Victor Turner, of the [INAUDIBLE] to theater. And he's an anthropologist, very famous for his early work about ritual as a social phenomenon for all of those pictures.

And he noticed that in pre-modern cultures that was played obviously that was also played, the play was usually very well coached and functionalized in these cultures, namely in passage rights. Passage rights, he says, were these liminal spaces, boundary spaces where people would temporarily leave their existing space in society, and play around, and act excessively to then be reintegrated into society into their new role, usually in their passage between being a

child, and then being the responsible adult.

You still have that kind of thing in the Amish [INAUDIBLE] in certain Amish communities where once you're considered to be at the age where you can become an adult, basically, you get to leave the community, do all the things you were never allowed to do in an Amish community-- jump around is the literal translation, [GERMAN]; it's from the Germans-- and then make the decision whether you want to return.

So you get to play around very literally, as [INAUDIBLE] said, in these places. But this is completely functionalized as a ritual to reproduce society. And what we noticed is in modern societies, singular societies, these liminal spaces disappeared. We don't have a lot of them, because we're not a strongly religious society anymore.

But there were societal spaces that retain forms and shapes of that, only they're used and functionalized in different ways. And to notify this, to indicate this distinction, he makes a distinction between liminal and liminoid. He says where it's liminal spaces, like passage rights, like the pre-modern, religious, and collective things that are obligatory. We have to do them, their play is instrumentalized. It's a means towards the end of getting you into society.

It reproduces the existing social order and improves the means. It's a means towards producing society, whereas liminoid spaces play becomes something that's not instrumental, but also telling, done for its sake. Play becomes something where you can change the order, even if temporarily. You can upset the social order, and play becomes a space where you can question the end society pursuits.

Should we get through this, instead of just reproducing it? Yeah?

AUDIENCE: Well, what did you say about the [INAUDIBLE]? What is that?

**SEBASTIAN
DETERDING:** Autotelic is from the Greek. Auto, self, and telos is goal. And autotelic means something is its own goal. I do it for its own sake.

AUDIENCE: OK.

**SEBASTIAN
DETERDING:** I eat because I enjoy eating, not because something else, as an example. So he notices that we have not these ritual spaces like passage rights so much anymore, but we have these liminoid spaces. These are spaces like art. He uses bases like science, where you get to toy around with ideas. These are spaces like theater.

These are spaces like play. These are time play. All these spaces retain these ritual functions, but they're somehow used differently. Give you a very practical example.

Art-- religious art in pre-modern times was a liminal space that just presented and reproduced the religious order as it should be. I'm just showing you how it should be, [INAUDIBLE], and so on, whereas modern liminoid art is allowed to toy around with this and use the imagery literally, play around with the imagery of previous pre-modern art, remix it with Coca-Cola presents the crucifixion of Christ to make critical, soulful commentary, to speak about is this the kind of commercialized society in which we live and should be living in that kind of society.

And we found this distinction between liminal and liminoid helped us very well to tease out the different political positions people had towards communication. The second poll that we found was very useful is from another book that most of the game studies people know, that is [INAUDIBLE], a French philosopher in the 1950s, *Men Playing Games*, [FRENCH], or [FRENCH]? [FRENCH]?

AUDIENCE: [FRENCH].

**SEBASTIAN
DETERDING:** Yeah, where he said that basically, all kinds of play and game forms, that we have a culture, a loosely folding on a spectrum of two poles. One pole he declares with the Latin *ludus* for basically a rule based game that's very orderly, where you strive in order to reach goals; every typical board game, or social game, or video game that you can think of on the one hand. And on the other hand, you have this free form improvisational, explorational, tumultuous play.

Think about children playing pretend play, or Lego. So all games and play forms have basically these two ideal poles in them, and things fall somewhere on these poles. And we notice that if we take these two dimensions and look at all the different rhetorics-- and we could talk about the rhetorics later.

But if we take all the different rhetorics there are, then they pretty neatly form this clear clustering. They fall into two clusters of opinions which are these underlying rhetorical disagreements about what games and plays should be in society. On the one hand, you have people who very much like games-- structures.

There's more structures, more rules, more feedback systems that are very liminal, but not liminal in the traditional, pre-modern way reproducing religious order, but liminal in a modern way, reproducing the existing social order of society. Basically, their position's the current

social order is good. It's perfect. Society should be as it is, but it has some flaws in execution, and we should use gains as technologies that governments and organizations can use to perfect the execution.

It's not that the way organizations or businesses organized as broken. It's just that people aren't motivated enough, so games are a great tool to motivate them more. I thought maybe we should fix the organizations themselves, whereas the opposite poll, most people who say gamification's bad are the ones who more or less see the current social order as bad. They are typically progressive and critical in general in their political views.

But say play-- the practice of play, like the [INAUDIBLE] thing is a great practice for people to resist the existing order and discover together what kind of world we want to begin with and to give you just some ideas of these different rhetorics that we find. So some of the rhetorics are, for instance, things like well being.

That's people like Jane McGonigal, people like Miguel [INAUDIBLE], people like myself that speak about self determination theory, [INAUDIBLE], the good life. And we all say well, what's the good life that we all aspire to? And obviously, in light of that, our current society's pretty broken.

But here's the thing about play. Play is a realized form of the good life, so we all strive to get there, or things like performance. So these are people who do pervasive games or who do LARPs, like action role playing games; all these much, much more free form play form to say, well, these are great activities for people to get together and experience that they can form a community, even if a temporal community together. And on the other hand, you have rhetorics like reinforcement, so people like [INAUDIBLE] and others who raw on behaviorist modes of thinking or behaviorist modes of thinking about games and say games are basically these incentives doling machines.

And so therefore, they're a great way of reproducing or incentivizing certain behaviors. Or a bit more complex, nudging. A lot of people say games are basically nudges. Just a show of hands, who knows the term nudging as a technical term? OK.

So who knows behavioral economics as a term? So neoclassical economics basically says people are rational actors. Give me the right information. Give me the right incentives, and I will do what you want me to do.

If I know this is helpful for me, and I care about my health, I'm definitely going to act healthy. Only then, psychology showed us that is not the case. You can give people as much information, and they might care as much as they want about their health, but they still don't behave healthily necessarily which led a lot of economists saying to us well, why then do people behave unhealthily?

And they started to run empirical experiments where they say, this is how economic theory predicts how people will behave, and here's how they actually behave. So there is a gap there between the two, but this gap is predictable. It's a repeating. It's a reoccurring pattern.

One of these reoccurring patterns, for instance, is temporal discounting, which is just a fancy technical term for I care for the thing right in front of me much more than for a thing way in the future. If they did actual economic disbursement to people saying, do you want \$1 now or \$100 a month from now?

A pure rational actor would always take the \$100, let's say. Because again, in no way, shape, or form will inflation, by that point, have invalidated the \$100 that much. But they found the majority of people took the \$1 now. And so they enlisted all these kind of cognitive biases and heuristics, these weird ways in which we deviate from actual rational behavior. And then they said look at games, at least that rhetoric.

They said look at games. They're basically machines for exploiting these kind of reliable flaws in our thinking. And so therefore, games are great for us to learn how to exploit them to get people to do other stuff, as well.

So so much for that. I'd like to finish, as I said, with teasing out scenarios, so what are the visions underlying here then? Then we'll get into debating. Namely, what are the positive or negative visions that come out of these different rhetorics?

Starting with the positive one, on both sides that we face, you can slice and dice them as you want. I slice and dice them in three positive scenarios, and lots of issues with them that we can no longer debate. The positive vision, the best possible world version of engagement-- the first one is engagement, which is a terrible, over-used term. But it's basically the idea that we can harness all the three cycles, all the free energy, all the cognitive surplus', [INAUDIBLE].

Thanks to the fact that people are now online, and no necessarily always watching television, we can use all the hours they poured into Wikipedia for really productive purposes. And then

people like Jane McGonigal said well, that's great. If we could use games, you can learn from games. And she put in this paper, because it's basically the white paper that underlies, "Reality is Broken," which she wrote back at the institute for the future.

We can use games as engines for a massively [INAUDIBLE] collaboration and participation to organize and incite people towards productive things like solving complex scientific issues, and science games, or stuff like that, or use games for civic participation, or the aspect of games, like DIY democracy, where you would get points for being an active citizen. The one issue-- lots of issues, but one issue I have with that is even if that would insight engagement of people-- for instance, use this to report pot holes in your street, it would always structure participation of people in a certain manner. So if we see this as a vision of society, we have to be aware that every structure for participation creates structures of who gets to participate, who's included in the executing.

You can also say who has technological access to these kinds of tools? Who runs around the whole time with a smartphone? Who even cares about this? Who has the technological literacy to use these tools?

That is with all the citizen participation tools, who actually uses this to report pot holes? And again, you find that this is very much stratified by socio-economic status. The second positive vision is community.

That's what I talked about as performance is the idea that we can use games and play to bring people together and to experience hey, we like each other. We're pretty much alike. We want the same things, and we think that this thing in our society is built, and so let's together get together and fix it.

So it's a way of bringing together people into new forms of community. This goes back to early movements, like the new games movement back in the Bay Area in the 1970s which underlies a lot of the still Utopian thinking in Silicon Valley where they basically said with the Vietnam War going, can't we create non-competitive games that get people together in order to understand that that is also a form of co-existing instead of constantly combating each other? And as Stewart Brand back then said, you can't change a game by winning it, or losing it, or refereeing it, or spectating it, because then you're still playing by the rules.

You still have to create a new game together to leave the old society and to move on. And contemporary examples of that are things like you're guerrilla gardening, and there are games

around guerrilla gardening as a community. Or my favorite example is Massively Multiplayer Soba by tilt factor. The treasure hunt through New York, through one of New York's most diverse neighborhoods.

And the idea is the difference teams get sheets with ingredients that they have to bring to the final cookout, where people cook together, only the ingredients are written in different languages; Hebrew, Hindi, whatever. So you have to go through this neighborhood, find people to translate the ingredients to you, and then tell you where you actually find all these local ingredients. That way, naturally getting into conversations with people in that neighborhood you would otherwise never have talked to.

And then the game gives you extra points for bringing stories about food from that culture or bringing actual people from the neighborhood to the final cookout. One issue again-- lots of issues, but one issue with that is that I'm always wondering to what extent-- these are basically again, things hipsters can do to make themselves feel well versus to what extent are these things that actually cite large scale social action or commodify your [INAUDIBLE], you'll find. The third positive vision is hacking; hacking systems.

The underlying idea there, and a lot of the references will say well, if there's one thing about games that's great it's their systems. Or one thing game's good at is systems, and one thing that you can do with games is you learn systems thinking. Anybody know *September 12*?

One of the early news games, persuasive games. The idea came out right after September 11th, shortly thereafter by Gonzalo Frasca. You basically see this little landscape in some long, disparate Arab country. You see some people running around in quote, unquote, "terrorist" uniforms, and then you just have this targeting circle. And then you can choose whether you want to fire bombs with them or not.

When you fire bombs, inevitably you will create collateral damage in terms of people and other things. And inevitably, people standing around that will mourn for the dead, and then some of them will likewise transform into terrorists. So it's the systemic model of violence beget violence.

By attacking, you will only create more resistance, basically. You may disagree with the argument, but it's a basic way of showing you how games can model a system and show a system and can [INAUDIBLE] systems. So the argument of hacking, as well; games are great for systems thinking or learnings to this kind of systems thinking.

And by making games about the broken systems we live in, like in those airport and security, about constantly changing new rules; what is allowed, what is not allowed. You notice how broken that kind of TSA system is, and by learning to build systems ourselves through game design and all kinds of tools that open up game design for other people, we might actually educate a generation of people who can then use that game design and knowledge in order to redesign the broken social systems in which we live. The issue with that is obviously, anybody has yet to show me that there is data for that, that that actually happens. OK. Final three, dystopia.

The first one is obviously the one that you most likely will come across the most [INAUDIBLE] when people were talking about gamification. That is this is a perfect control society. And my favorite one, has anybody seen the talk by Jesse Schell?

The Gamepocalypse. That's one of the other initial pieces of media that the whole gamification thing started. It's a talk he gave in 2010 at a game design conference, and he described the future world in which game designers would rule.

And on, and on, and on it goes. It's a five minute riff within the talk where he just runs with the idea and says, what if all kinds of organizations and governments would basically start to use point of incentives systems to get people to do everything they want to do. And people say, this is silly. This is ridiculous. This is also scary.

The only thing is it's also becoming a reality. Shortly after the talk, there was this sort of green goose which actually did sensor kids. So you can use ubiquitous computing everywhere, especially to brush your teeth.

Some people are obsessed with brushing their teeth and getting points for it-- to measure everything, and then set up your own reward system for that, and you have these default senses that you can use for everything else. And if you say well, that's nice if it's for people. That's not what organizations do-- well, this year's one part of the health program that I was introduced to at Northeastern, which I find very cute, which is Virgin Pulse.

Basically, it's one of these health trackers, step trackers. And if I use the step tracker for my university, hey. I actually get points, and the points are translated into reduced insurance premiums. Now you might say well-- a lot of my colleagues said well, this is great.

You're getting money, so why shouldn't I do it? I said well, I don't know if I actually want either my employer or my health insurance to know how healthy or unhealthy my behavior [INAUDIBLE] myself.

And then the next time I switch an insurance, the insurance looks at the data and says-- hm. We should raise your premium. The larger issue behind that is basically that most of these systems are at face value are sold as more fun or rewards or empowerment to the individual.

Like *Rescue Time* is this application that you can let running. And then it tells you, just by keeping in the back end, what kind of applications were running all through the day and what kind of browser windows you had open in order to discover what you're time syncs are in order to be more productive as an individual. Yay.

Only then there's this nice button, Looking for Rescue Time for Entire Team or Organization, click here. And then you see the management feature which allows the manager, who installs this all across the team to see exactly what everybody's actually doing on their computer the whole day. And obviously, this issue is true everywhere we use gamified applications are installed, which according to the vision, will be everywhere.

So you can even imagine something like Amazon saying hey, because we want people to read more books, we're going to deal out virtual rewards and incentives for people to read more, because then we make more money only while I do so. And then I read all the volumes of *Das Capital*, somebody else might also be interested in that kind of data, that I'm actually currently interested in Marxism. The third issue there is that face value of fun and self realization at companies.

And all Silicon Valley companies have to have sleds. This here is at YouTube. Obviously, a YouTube red.

I recently did a bit of research around playful offices. They really have all sleds somehow, for some reason. We can talk about that.

But that, in the back end, is really covert exploitation. We make it so fun and so comfy here in this place that you never want to leave the workplace, at which point then, you get suicides and exhaustion in places like the Las Vegas downtown project run by Zappos there, or as [INAUDIBLE] nicely put it, gamification is a mechanism of decoupling alienation. I feel like I'm not realizing myself. I feel I'm not doing what I'm passionate about from exploitation.

With gamification, I may not be alienated by my working, or this is fun. This is great, but I'm still exploited. The majority of the revenue still stays with your employer. And the big issue with these systems is they're all implemented in code. This is all codified, algorithmic, automated regulation. And the big issue with that is you can't argue with it. If you have an overdraft on your bank, you could still go to your bank teller, depending on which country you are. Here, they are typically very neo autonomized, but in European countries, not.

And then you can say listen, you've known me for 10 years, and I only need an extension for another day, and I'd pay the money back, and he does so. We know there will always be exceptions to the rule in reality. The only issues with these algorithmic system. I can't argue with them.

I don't even know according to which rules they tell me yes or no or give me certain rewards. And I can't change that, contrary to other political systems. So basically, the control fear is that it's on the one hand, big brother watching you, because it's constant surveillance in the back, and all your data is captured. It comes with the playfulness of veneers, so it's the Aldous Huxley soma. All this is fun and happy, and why should we care about it?

And it's a little bit overload, because all of this is run by computers. It's not even run by people anymore. As I said, this is going to be the worst case scenario here.

The big issue obviously, which I pointed out in text here is that these kind of control systems destroy the very thing that makes games fun to begin with. They give you the freedom of playing, voluntary choosing to the activity. Second, and third, and then we're done with negative vision. The second negative vision is gamification doesn't even lead to more control in society. It just reproduces existing society as it is.

It reproduces the systems and the rhetorics that we have in our system. The overarching narrative, if you look at persuasive technology with the quantified self, [INAUDIBLE]. The overarching rhetoric of all of these systems is when we have social issues or when we have individual issues like obesity, like climate change, or stuff like that, it's the individual's fault. It's the individual's fault, because all of these systems address individual behavior.

If only I motivated you to run a bit better, you'd not [INAUDIBLE]. If only I motivated you to drive a bit more fuel efficiently each day, we wouldn't have global warming, basically. That's the argument by addressing these things through specified applications. So basically, the

underlying rhetoric there is this very American one.

Anything can be accomplished if one has the desire and determination. If there is a social issue, if there is an individual issue, it's because the individual didn't have the willpower. And basically, these technical tools just give you an augmentation to your willpower by motivating you if you can't motivate yourself.

Is there anything wrong with this rhetoric? Well, let's see. There are other places where the same rhetoric was around, like Maoist China, where we had slogans like when discipline's reinforced, revolution cannot fail, saying if the great leap forward trying to mass industrialize a country of several hundred million people within the term of five years, if that kills millions of people, it's not because the planet was bonkers to begin with. It's because the individuals didn't put in enough effort.

In the same way, I think gamification and lots of persuasive technology makes the same issue of the background systemic root causes. The deeper underlying societal issues that are not caused by individual behavior necessarily or that are not just [INAUDIBLE] on the individual weather. You'll interpret the [INAUDIBLE] of environmental psychology that recently made the same argument where it said, we're basically fooling ourselves if we believe that getting people to recycle more will solve any of our environmental issues, because municipal loves production, just as an example.

So all the waste that everybody of us produces in a city that's collected by the municipalities, all the waste that we produce-- how much is municipal waste production from total US waste production? What share? Any numbers?

AUDIENCE: 10%.

SEBASTIAN 10%, more or less.

DETERDING:

AUDIENCE: 5%.

SEBASTIAN 5%, more or less.

DETERDING:

AUDIENCE: 2%?

**SEBASTIAN
DETERDING:**

2%-- too low-- 3%. So if you all recycle more, we're reducing 10% of 3%, whereas most of the waste production happens in industrial production.

Most of the waste production happens in supply chains. It doesn't happen at the level of individual waste. Same goes for energy savings. Same goes for all the issues. We're addressing the wrong things with this kind of thing if we're always focusing on the individual behavior.

Third and final one is it's not control. It's not even reproducing existing social order. It's just reference. My favorite example for that is the PlayPump, a system invented by a civil engineer in South Africa sometime in the 90s. And in 1994, a retired advertising executive discovered it and said, this is a great idea. Let me buy the patent, and let me make this big.

The idea of the PlayPump is basically lots of cities in Africa and other developing nations don't have enough fresh water pumps. So what they said is hey, instead of the traditional fresh water pumps, let's install a fresh water pump that's actually a roundabout and put a reservoir on top of it that's seen here, behind. And so water is pumped for the local village's water consumption by the children playing.

Nobody has to work for the water. The children enjoy using the roundabout. They will pump the water up. And you know how we pay for this whole thing?

We use the reservoir as an advertising space. So the advertisers will pay for the installment of this. It's a great story. It's a great new story to say hey, water is easy as child's play, dah, dah, dah, dah, dah.

It got a great, favorable PBS documentary, lots of other favorable press attention. He got then \$60 million US dollars in aid promised from US aid. Only then, development aid workers started raising their hands and saying, sorry. Nobody wants to advertise it to the developing nations, it turns out, especially not in rural villages.

And they found out that the pump is more difficult to install, less efficient, more difficult to service than existing water pumps in other cultures. And they found that the average water consumption of an average African village is so big that children would have to operate the roundabout with their body power for 27 continuous hours per day.

So it's impossible. It's impossible that children can produce enough water [INAUDIBLE]. So therefore, it ended up that the adults were operating the roundabout, only the roundabout was

built for children. So the adults always had to hunker down and use this one, so they were breaking their backs as they were doing so, very literally.

So this thing is a great new story that gives you great pictures with all kinds of things. And the argument, or the fear, or the negative vision here is that gamification, like the PlayPump, is very much this. If companies, or organizations, or governments talking about we're using games to power, engage, and dah, dah, dah, dah, dah, or when the current administration says we're going to put constant [INAUDIBLE] into to the White House Office of Science and Technology Office in order to run games for brand challenges, this is not so much because it actually changes stuff, but because it is, in Elizabeth [INAUDIBLE] word, the [INAUDIBLE].

That is it's nice sounding words with no meaning, whose only purpose is to appear cool and modern as organizations. Enough talk for me. The rest of the talk should be about exactly that, or you think the proper place in plain society has . Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

I left my water up there.

**GABRIELLE
TREPANIER-
JOBIN:**

Well, thank you. It's very interesting how you really frame different kind of rhetoric about gamification, because that's really the way I feel when I read the three texts that were at the program for today that was Zichermann's text that was really what you said, like the type of rhetoric that is very Utopian, conception of gamification, something that allows engagement, and so on, and so forth. And there was this very dystopian text that we read about that was a Schrape text, and we were thinking gamification that was linking gamification with control, governance, surveyance at some extent.

And then that there was your text, so I don't know where you rate yourself on the scale of utopia and dystopia. I felt you were in between trying to compromise all this, but maybe I'm wrong.

**SEBASTIAN
DETERDING:**

Multiple things. So A, I am aware that I am, myself, in place there, because I have my own politics. I have my own values. I just tried to be explicit to compensate. Listen, this is the background from which I'm coming. And viewed through this lens, this is what I see.

If you look through a different lens, you might see something else. So therefore, I say, I'm personally a bit more interested in play than games, although [INAUDIBLE] games are

structures that [INAUDIBLE] place, that they're not unimportant as that. But it's the same way as you say ultimately. It's men hammering and hammer, hammering and nails, but it's still nice to have a hammer to do something to do with [INAUDIBLE].

So even if a play's important, and in the end you want the hammer, but the nail in the wall, it's nice if you have a game to afford play, because that usually makes things easier. So in that sense, in that spectrum, I'm sort of in the negative. And then definitely, in terms of my values, I come from virtue ethical errors to the [INAUDIBLE] perspective.

So the question, what is the [INAUDIBLE]? I just think this is my framing. And viewed through that framing, I think, play presents as a vision of how living could be and what we should aspire to. And other people might have other's points.

So I wouldn't view myself as Utopian or dystopian. It's just I have a view for this. I think there is potential. The big issue for me, as I said, I also design [INAUDIBLE].

And parallel to studying this stuff, I've been running around, doing workshops, or actually designing work with companies, like BMW, the motor company who said, can you gamify for assembly training for us? OK. And that drove my interest.

Is there a way of doing this right? Is there something we can actually learn from games? And I think that is the case. It's just not what the current popular conception of game indication presents as what we can learn in the case. Those are just two different things.

When I now come into an executive board room, basically three years ago, the challenge was games? What are you even doing? So making people understand the concept versus the potential.

Now the issue is banks to immediately [INAUDIBLE] of the concept. That therefore, they all have already an existing preconception of what this means. Oh, fee [INAUDIBLE]. Yeah, sure. More of that.

And then you have to break that conception. Say yeah, I know, but that's also something, but that's not what you actually can learn from games. So that's my perception on this issue.

So questions? I had a couple of initial questions from the text [INAUDIBLE]. I've clustered them into three clusters for me that we could go through. But other questions, as I was talking-- I'm just starting collecting, and then we give them to a [INAUDIBLE] other questions that popped

up for you. It's late, I know.

**GABRIELLE
TREPANIER-
JOBIN:** Perhaps it's better if we group them in categories?

**SEBASTIAN
DETERDING:** Yeah. I would do that. Or if you need energy, we can do a little game to get the energy going.
Happy to do so. I was serious.

**GABRIELLE
TREPANIER-
JOBIN:** I have many questions.

**SEBASTIAN
DETERDING:** OK. So here's a thing. I actually would suggest doing that, if you're all OK. If you don't want to, it's fine. You can just sit here, but in order to get the energy up, because it's actually late, I suggest all of us go out on the floor for two minutes at most.

That's all I ask. And again, if you don't want to participate, it's perfectly fine.

**GABRIELLE
TREPANIER-
JOBIN:** It's their spontaneous reactions to what has been said, because it was slightly different than what we read.

**SEBASTIAN
DETERDING:** I know.

**GABRIELLE
TREPANIER-
JOBIN:** And perhaps that's why.

**SEBASTIAN
DETERDING:** I know.

**GABRIELLE
TREPANIER-
JOBIN:** We can also ask you questions about the readings.

**SEBASTIAN
DETERDING:** You can ask me all kinds. So the three questions I took out of the readings, and I'll just list them as far as I understood them, and then you can add ad libitum, and we'll start a

discussion about this. The first one is just when is a game slash gamification?

It's really this definitional debate. Is it still the game [INAUDIBLE], or is this already gamification? Or when starts gamification flipping through a game? That was part of the questions.

The other one was this yeah, yeah. There's all this criticism about this thing. But what is good, as in useful, actually applicable learning from games slash gamification?

So is there-- this is all criticism. Is there actually a way of [INAUDIBLE] the situation in which it can be used? Maybe just a specific audience and get the audience's change based on more people get used to games, and stuff like that.

And the third question is basically, I don't know who that was. Somebody said, can I use that in my startup? I know it's very risky, but you pretend like there's a question. It follows from the other. Can I use it, or when can I use it? When can I use it?

So those are the three. If you feel misrepresented or left out, let me know. Or if you feel no, based on this one here, or now that I wrote them down, other stuff comes to your head. So we'll just collect a good one.

Yeah?

AUDIENCE:

I was just curious with the [INAUDIBLE] space you had made earlier between the styles. Is there anything that exists in the other two quadrants really? [INAUDIBLE] something's on the line, but so there isn't anything between?

**SEBASTIAN
DETERDING:**

That's a very quick one. Yes, there are two, but they're outliers. So if this was liminal-- so basically reproducing society, and this was liminoid, questioning being outside of society.

And this one here is [INAUDIBLE]. So this is games, whether it be [INAUDIBLE], and rules, and feedback, and stuff. And this is [INAUDIBLE], so this is free play. Everything should be Lego. And as you said, there's the big cluster here, and there's the big cluster here.

There is one cluster here that's basically Ian Bogost and a couple of other people. And then there's this cluster here, which would be called industrial playfulness. This classic procedural rhetoric is basically we can use games, with a capital G as systems to model other broken systems in society.

This is how airport security is programmed. This is why immigration's broken. However, you make a system in order to make an argument and invite people to see how the way this game models a piece of society.

Fits, or it doesn't fit my mental model of that, how that piece of society works. And me negotiating that clash between well, I thought airport security works this way. This thing drove me that way.

How do I make sense of that? Based on that clashing, you start thinking about society, and then maybe come to a different idea or come to criticizing yourself. So this is basically a version that's deeply critic or liminoid in its politics, but still says let's use games for that.

The other one in that corner, industrial playfulness, these are things like innovation games or game storming. Here's a recent [INAUDIBLE]. These are people in design agencies like IDEO or Frog saying, we can use the playful activities, ways of structuring processes in order to reliably produce creativity.

The great thing about design agencies, and I've worked with a couple of them is that they can promise enterprises to produce innovation accountively. You give us x amount of money. And in y amount of weeks, we have produced that amount of [INAUDIBLE]. And we use playfulness. We use yellow rooms, and we use brainstorming, and we do these silly design exercises in order to do so.

That's very much used in play, but very much for existing structures. Other questions?

**GABRIELLE
TREPANIER-
JOBIN:**

Well, I have one. I wanted to talk a bit about gamification in workplaces, because I think that a lot of students raise these questions and on the forum. In your text, in rethinking unification, you say that most of the gamification practices and workplaces disregard the context in which people come to play and ignore that play is supposed to be a voluntary act.

So you mentioned that forcing workers to play decreases that positive feeling of performance, and that having to play in an appropriate context can lead to embarrassment, right? So I think I was not the only one to ask myself, does it mean that gamification techniques should never be used in the workplaces?

Is the work context not suitable for gamification? Or can gamification be optional in a workplace? I think that Ryan-- not Ryan-- Shawn, he had this similar question. I don't know if

you want to elaborate on it.

AUDIENCE: Oh, yeah. I was just disheartened reading even a somewhat feeble attempt to incorporate gamification--

SEBASTIAN Yeah.

DETERDING:

AUDIENCE: --so as far as the worker's reception went. And I was wondering, is there a way to include playful elements, like an opt in strategy? Because I would enjoy a playful work environment, or that sort of thing that they see as an electronic web.

SEBASTIAN OK. I would tease out two things there. That is I always like to use the technical term,
DETERDING: autonomy, because it has an established meaning. There is an established theory behind it, and psychology was voluntaryist, freedom; very overdetermined [INAUDIBLE].

This one, I use it, and then I point to a certain theory, and that's why I prefer that term and to talk about this. And autonomy is still a muddled mess, in terms of work life and games. Can we go to that? And then the second one, can we learn from games in the work place in general?

So disregarding the voluntaryist issue, are there ways in which we could make life and work anonymous? Let's speak about the autonomy one first. There is this interesting early book, Julian Dibbell, games journalist who now became a lawyer. Before time, he was a great journalist in the late '90s, looking at all the online games craze, and he wrote a book. *Rape in Cyberspace*, and all these kind of books.

So it was in plain money, how he basically made a living with designing virtual [INAUDIBLE] space. And he noticed he was one of the first Western observers who sold gold farmers. For those who are not familiar with the term, gold farmers are basically people, supposedly always Chinese gold farmers. And then there are other articles saying that's stereotyping, because we also find in other places-- anyhow, Chinese gold farmers are people who level up characters or win virtual items in games for a living.

And so I gain a powerful sword in *World of Warcraft*, and then I sell it to other people. And usually, these kind of gold farmers themselves don't do it, but it's other people hiring poor people off the street in China, young people to basically play *World of Warcraft*. It's day by day, and day in, day out in 20 hour shifts or more, and just sleep.

They go back and play as a waged war. So the more gold you play, the [INAUDIBLE] played for the virtual gold in real money, which is a classic form of peace work which other people, if you've ever done peace work in an actual assembly line, so you know that's pretty excruciating as an activity. And he found two weird things.

A, he said, they were playing. They were working in this game. And according to standard theory, they should have hated every minute of it, working this game. But it seemed pretty playful at times.

At times, it also seems pretty stressed. But at times, they were still playful in that context. And then he said the weirdest thing is when they handed the day off, they would hop into the internet cafe next door and play games-- the same games.

And so how can that-- I'm puzzled. I can't even make a story to begin to make sense. Why would they do the thing voluntarily that they were forced to do there? Why would the forced thing sometimes still be fun to them?

And the part of the argument, or part of the way that you psychologically can tease that out is say that autonomy has a lot to do with your internal perception of the situation. That is if in the moment you feel like this is what I want to do, I currently feel like doing this. And so therefore, I enjoy this. This is what I want to do. You don't have to force yourself to do it.

It feels like this is a true expression of yourself. And so therefore, it feels autonomous. If you go to a cloister for a six week retreat, and somebody tells you at 6:00 AM in the morning, get up. Sweet the stairs, because that's part of your retreat.

If you then think about I actually put myself into this oyster, and I want to do this, and I know it's a good thing-- you might still go-- mm. But you feel this is an expression of yourself, and you still feel that certainly this is a voluntary act. This is still an autonomous act.

And you might still find a way of getting absorbed in the activity of [INAUDIBLE], and then you forget the fact that you're actually tired. So the degree to which I perceive myself that this is currently an outflow of my goals, wants, and my identity is chiefly responsible to whether this is autonomous or not for me, as an experience, which is something that [INAUDIBLE] and [INAUDIBLE], author of [INAUDIBLE]. One of the core books in game studies [INAUDIBLE] has found where he said even in concentration camps, people could be absorbed in the activity. People could feel a degree of control, voluntarism in autonomy, because they chose how to

deal with the task that were prescribed to them.

Even if they work for the [INAUDIBLE] that lent in their ultimate demise. So it's this what internal stance do I take to what's my situation? So it's not that because workplace, therefore, obligatory context, that are therefore necessary in autonomous.

It's how do I perceive this to be an outflow of my personal self? And there's been research, especially in education how people can facilitate an autonomous orientation towards an activity, even in the mandatory context, like school. There's stuff teachers can do to tell the students, listen. I know the next exercise is shitty. Sorry for that.

Here is why doing this is still useful and helpful for you personally. And I would ask you to do it, because it's helpful for you; asking permission, explaining why, acknowledging that it's tedious - all these giving me free options how to do it, with whom to do it, how to approach the problem; lots of ways in which you can structure an obligatory situation to still be autonomous [INAUDIBLE]. So it's a complicated psychological thing that has a lot to do with what is my internal stance towards it?

But there's a lot of design things around the social situations we still can do, which leads us to the second thing. Is there things we can learn from games in order to make a work environment playful? As I said, with the sleds, I looked into their research, because I was invited to give a talk at a conference about office furniture.

They wanted to gamify office furniture. Sure. And so I looked into the whole thing and said, how do people gamify offices and office furniture? And notice that it's actually a big trend, the playful office.

And if I say playful office, just what are you thinking? What images jumps to your mind? Playful office.

AUDIENCE: Google.

SEBASTIAN Google.

DETERDING:

AUDIENCE: Nerf guns in the office.

SEBASTIAN Nerf guns in the office. What else?

DETERDING:

AUDIENCE: Ping pong?

SEBASTIAN Ping pong?

DETERDING:

AUDIENCE: Ping pong in the office.

SEBASTIAN Ping pong in the office. Yes, what else?

DETERDING:

AUDIENCE: Insert fun thing in the office. Bean bag chairs and other horrible-for-your-back furniture.

SEBASTIAN Yeah. What else? Playful office, just off the top of your head.

DETERDING:

AUDIENCE: Free food everywhere.

AUDIENCE: Weird looking, ergonomic furniture.

SEBASTIAN Not working around my furniture, free food everywhere, plants. Yeah, plants are totally important, even fake plants.

DETERDING:

AUDIENCE: Scooters.

SEBASTIAN Scooters, yes.

DETERDING:

AUDIENCE: Friendly bosses.

SEBASTIAN Friendly bosses? Then we're getting into different topics. Yeah, exactly.

DETERDING:

AUDIENCE: Very scary company open work spaces without cubicles.

SEBASTIAN Yes, open work spaces. The weird thing about cubicles is in terms of their design history, their point was to be free. Back in the 1960s, people started working on designing the cubicle, and their point was to actually create playful architecture. Their point was to make this is a way in which individual workers, without big effort, could continue to redesign the office to their own needs.

DETERDING:

They would just take the balls and rearrange them to huddle their space as they see fit for a project or for individual close time. Only then the corporations discovered hey, we can also use cubicles to give people a bit of sound, and visual privacy, and cram the most possible people into the smallest possible space. Cubicles were initially invented in order to be a more free and open office work, and then they would reuse the floor very differently, which points to an important part this is what you put in there as a design element is often not so important as how people use it in practice.

The practice is the way in which people live something is just as important as the things you put into the office, like bean bags. So no. All of these things are true. Bean bags usually will find everything that screams playground; bright colors.

AUDIENCE: Slides.

**SEBASTIAN
DETERDING:** Slides, natural textures. So you have fake grass, real grass. You have sand. You have round shapes. There will always be round shapes and all these kind of things-- things that look playful.

But structurally, if you ask yourself what makes a toy? What makes a good toy, or the opposite of a good toy. What makes a good toy? Any suggestions?

What are toys that you actually enjoy toying around for a long, long, long time ago? Mhm?

AUDIENCE: *Call of Duty?*

**SEBASTIAN
DETERDING:** That's a game. A toy. *Call of Duty* can be used as a toy. We'll get to that.

AUDIENCE: Simple, multi-purpose objects? Kickballs, and shopping lists, and buckets, and stuff like that?

**SEBASTIAN
DETERDING:** Yeah. Wide shock.

**GABRIELLE
TREPANIER-
JOBIN:** It stimulates creativity?

AUDIENCE: Because you can use it for more than one thing.

SEBASTIAN You can use it for more than one thing.

DETERDING:

AUDIENCE: Because when a teacher's not looking, I could hit people with it. But if it's still the other stuff with it, [INAUDIBLE] like oh.

SEBASTIAN Other suggestions?

DETERDING:

AUDIENCE: Nothing. Nerf gun?

SEBASTIAN Why?

DETERDING:

AUDIENCE: It's fun.

SEBASTIAN What makes Nerf guns fun?

DETERDING:

AUDIENCE: Give it to a couple of people.

SEBASTIAN Yeah.

DETERDING:

AUDIENCE: And then it becomes fun, all of a sudden.

[LAUGHTER]

SEBASTIAN Again, Nerf gun, as such, is not fun. Fun is when the people actually decide to go around and-

DETERDING: -

AUDIENCE: Oh, I see. I see.

SEBASTIAN And I would say the Nerf gun invites people to actually temporarily go out of bounds and go out of their regular rules. So a lot of playing--

AUDIENCE: I was going to say a Barbie doll.

SEBASTIAN Barbie doll. Why Barbie doll?

DETERDING:

AUDIENCE: Because you could basically do whatever you want. You could play house with it. You can make up a story with it. You could act out going to work. You can pretend that your Barbie doll's having a wedding.

[INAUDIBLE] sort of thing.

AUDIENCE: I think it totally solves the blank canvas problem that involved-- if I say I want to play something, but I have nothing in front of me, I'm not going to be inspired to do anything necessarily. But if I have a toy, [INAUDIBLE] it's a Barbie doll, oh. It's a person.

I can pretend it's a person. I can play like it's a person. Or a Nerf gun gives me, oh, it's a gun. I can pretend it's a gun. It gives me something to work on though.

SEBASTIAN Mhm.

DETERDING:

AUDIENCE: It's like modular things. It's like those K'nex.

SEBASTIAN Yep.

DETERDING:

AUDIENCE: Little sheets, and marbles, and things like that.

SEBASTIAN Yeah. You teased out very successfully, the two [INAUDIBLE]. The one thing is it involved a purpose.

It's underspecified. It doesn't prescribe one specific way in which [INAUDIBLE]. Think about Fisher Price will often [INAUDIBLE] toys. They're the worst possible toys imaginable.

They just have a number of buttons, and then you hit the button. It makes a certain sound, or it flashes a certain light. And I discovered yeah, that button always produces that light.

That button always produces that sound until it becomes a social experiment where you only try to find out which is the button that annoys mom and dad [INAUDIBLE]? That's fun. The thing itself is not necessarily fun, so it's underspecified.

There are loads of different things you can do with them, and you can explore this possibility space, which is the possibly of space in Legos, or in Barbies, or in any other thing. And in addition, it gives you a constraint or a starting point. It's not just a blank canvas.

It gives you a seed for the exploration of that [INAUDIBLE], whereas most of these other spaces, or like Fisher Price toys [INAUDIBLE]. They look playful. Colors, [INAUDIBLE] sleds. But they are not an underspecified possibility space.

They are not things that you can use in very many ways that invite you to reuse, and abuse, and jump over existing [INAUDIBLE] how to use this thing as you see fit. And if you look into what acclimates [INAUDIBLE] office architecture, you find stuff like actually, what's the building-- building 20? The historically famous building where most of the MIT innovations that you were involved with--

AUDIENCE: Yeah. Quite a different [INAUDIBLE].

**SEBASTIAN
DETERDING:** Yeah, exactly. That building. And when [INAUDIBLE], some people here at MIT, looked at what made that thing such an incubator, apart from the fact that it was a collision space for lots of people in different disciplines, they had no way but to bump into each other the whole time.

The second thing is it was a barrack. And it was such a run down barrack that nobody cared if you wanted to have this big machine in there that took three floors that you just [INAUDIBLE] your balls through, forced through, which was that everybody was doing it.

It was a modulous case that everybody deems as they see fit for weird things. So the question, can we learn from games for office work to make it playful? Well, if one of the things that invites play is an open possibility space for exploration where I get to choose where it's autonomy supported, because I have a lot of choices what to do.

Give me an office space that works like that. Give me working rules that are like that, like results only work environments. I don't prescribe to you how you do it. I give you a goal, and you choose who you want to do it, how you want to do it, et cetera .

If you feel that is too little structure for you, then the good game designer would give you a bit of scaffolding and say, then come back to me as a supervisor, and I give you a tip. But other than that, go out. Just come back when you have it done.

That would be one of the many ways you can learn from games that are not about having a feedback system.

AUDIENCE: I play a lot of games, and we move towards implementing trying to make an exterior to the

game economist and things like that, and trademark [INAUDIBLE] exteriorly, and start to model the real world in that sense. What do you think about a lot of that? I think you gave it as the other half of the equation, where you take the real world into the game, so to speak, where people now dish on commodities, and so a form of betting is they can't bet real world items.

**SEBASTIAN
DETERDING:**

It's interesting. It's the point where I am then the sociologist, and you start to notice. We have certain cultural notions about what games all should be, a traditionally modern notion, which is this leisure time activity. It's voluntary.

You can't gain or lose anything by it. The moment you do that, it's gambling. It's not really gaming. That's a different thing, gambling and gaming, although the gambling industry, because of that always wants to say, no, no. Gambling is gaming.

But culturally, we make that distinction to say the moment there is something at stake, it's not really gaming anymore. And the interesting thing with all of these things is that it basically upturns existing institutionalizations of how games traditionally happen. And then people look at this thing and say, how the heck are we going to make sense of this?

And how the heck are we going to regulate it, or legislate it, and what's right, and what's wrong? So first of all, I just find it interesting, because like every other media convergence phenomenon, it just throws existing orders into relief, and then people have to scramble through the mess. What else I make of the-- it's the same as freemium games, where you pay for in game advancements, where a lot of them, the traditional triple [INAUDIBLE] says no, no, no, no, no, no, no.

This is dirty. This is evil. You bring economic things into our shiny, pristine little temples where economics has no place.

And then as terrible as the concept of the magic circle is, what they're basically describing is in the old AAA industry economic model, they play games, the *Call of Duties*, money was admittance and allowed into that game space. But when I'm in the game space, money has no role. In the freemium world, you get into the game for free. And then to get ahead, within the game, sometimes you have to pay money.

It's just a different way in which money factors into game play. It's just that most people are used to this model and say game play should be free from economic considerations. Only it hasn't been for AAA games either, because AAA games traditionally, because of the kind of

business models they have, were built such that they gave great tradeoff for it, because that's the way you get a lot of people to do this. AAA games are notoriously risk averse. You just get *Call of Duty 24/7*, and the next version, the next version, or the next version.

Why? Because traditional AAA games are so investment intensive; dozens of millions of dollars, that the people who give the money say, the only way we know we're going to recoup our investments is due to the very same recipe-- again, that we did before where we reduce the risk. So in that sense, money influences what happens within the game as well, just in a different way, and in a way people are not used to, and people scream murder.

There are then different things with [INAUDIBLE] I would ask is that do I like that aesthetically or not? That's a different [INAUDIBLE]. Based on my personal, ethical evaluation, do I think certain ways of free to play games are organized in a nice way or not? And I would also say no, but it's the same phenomenon. Mhm?

AUDIENCE: So I know you talk about using people or [INAUDIBLE] to [INAUDIBLE] you hide within games, and then you turn around and sell that. What about games or situations where you end up making a lot of money, but not really intending to?

Like you're still out there playing the game even online or something and you find items, or you acquire assets that are then worth a lot of money.

SEBASTIAN Mhm.

DETERDING:

AUDIENCE: And games like *Dodo 2* and *TF2* that now, [INAUDIBLE]. So people sell characters after a point, and then [INAUDIBLE].

SEBASTIAN Yeah.

DETERDING:

AUDIENCE: You play through a game, you get past a certain point of aggression. You cite your character, and statutes like that. Or like he was saying, recent games like *Dodo* and *Counter-Strike*, a lot of the battle games, where they try the policy that you can get drops that are worth large amounts of money by simply playing a game.

AUDIENCE: So they're not necessarily purposely farming for items, but being aware that that's a possibility, and that also being part of the [INAUDIBLE] proclaim.

AUDIENCE: Right. From the outset I would say, whatever floats your boat. If you, as an individual say that's something that I enjoy doing, or that's something that I want to do for all kinds of reasons, then feel free to do so. So to what extent is that then still a game?

Or is it a game that I play is an interesting question, which basically brings us to when is the game a game, or when is the game a gamification? The first thing I would do is as long as I, as an individual, play this predominantly in order to have fun, it fits the regular mold of how we would say that. Incidentally, in the end, you find that the exhaust of what you can do, you can also set off.

It's just oh. At that point, it's nice, interesting, and weird. So let's try and explicate this one here, actually. Just shout out.

When is something a game? What are the conditions that have to-- or how to determine whether something is a game or [INAUDIBLE]? Yeah?

AUDIENCE: I think that the biggest thing is the voluntary playing. So it's a game if it's voluntary.

SEBASTIAN Voluntary, OK.

DETERDING:

AUDIENCE: A reward system?

SEBASTIAN OK. If it has a reward system, it's a game. If it doesn't, it's not a game?

DETERDING:

AUDIENCE: Not necessarily, right?

SEBASTIAN I'm asking you.

DETERDING:

AUDIENCE: Oh.

SEBASTIAN You suggested a reward system. I'm just asking.

DETERDING:

AUDIENCE: I think it is not unique to games, but games should definitely have a reward system.

SEBASTIAN They should have one because--

DETERDING:

AUDIENCE: Well, what's the incentive? There should be one behind a game. So it may be a feeling that you're getting smarter, or maybe you're getting points.

Or solving a puzzle. There should be something that is captivating you. But the reward system-- when you walk in doing your job, and you're getting paid for it, it's also a reward system.

So I feel like it's not unique to games, but games should definitely offer a reward system.

SEBASTIAN OK. Is voluntariness unique to games?

DETERDING:

GABRIELLE No.

**TREPANIER-
JOBIN:**

AUDIENCE: No.

SEBASTIAN I can cook for the enjoyment of cooking. So we were playing a game outside. Did you get a
DETERDING: reward for that in your understanding of a reward?

AUDIENCE: It may not be something as trivial as hey, just get plus one point or plus two points. But definitely, you could bond with people.

SEBASTIAN Yeah.

DETERDING:

AUDIENCE: So yes, it was a reward.

SEBASTIAN OK. So I'm just making sure that you're--

DETERDING:

AUDIENCE: Besides the energy of waking up--

SEBASTIAN Yeah. I'm just saying that your way of understanding the reward here is something that is not
DETERDING: necessarily tied to a reward system. As you do x number of things, you get the x number of points translatable into the y number with something else.

So the suggestion is you award [INAUDIBLE] broccoli as there is a desired result, however you want to construe the desired result. That's like economists say preferences, which basically means everything [INAUDIBLE]. Mhm?

AUDIENCE: I have a question. Are we just saying when is something a game? Or are we trying to differentiate between when it's a game and when it's gamification?

**SEBASTIAN
DETERDING:** We'll get the gamification. Now it's just when is something a game?

AUDIENCE: OK. Because then voluntary is not [INAUDIBLE], because I was thinking of it in terms of--

**SEBASTIAN
DETERDING:** Ah.

AUDIENCE: --is it a game or a gamification?

**SEBASTIAN
DETERDING:** So a game is voluntary. Gamification is [INAUDIBLE], or the other way around. Why?

AUDIENCE: Because gamification is more of a system that I guess you could choose to be part of it. So if you go to a weird place that does have a game like culture, or you're choosing to do that. But then you could also inevitably end up in a gamification culture where you don't-- if everything becomes like that, or you don't want to be in it. But a game, like say video games are playing. I could have refrained from going outside and playing tag.

So it wasn't a voluntary action.

**SEBASTIAN
DETERDING:** Yeah.

AUDIENCE: I don't know if I agree that it's necessarily not voluntary.

**SEBASTIAN
DETERDING:** OK.

AUDIENCE: So I think that games are that may be non-voluntary, but then gamification, something like it's a game if I just play sports because I enjoy playing sports. But if I'm playing soccer because I want to get the statistics on my Fitbit or my pace counter for my health insurance, then it's

gamification.

SEBASTIAN What about professional sports? Like I play soccer, because I earn \$5 million a year for
DETERDING: playing soccer. And if I know if I lose that next game, I won't win that marketing contract [INAUDIBLE].

I really have to play well at this game. Is that then, still a game? Or is it gamification? Or is it something else?

AUDIENCE: I can't play.

AUDIENCE: I could, and that goes back to what you're saying about the economy, [INAUDIBLE]. If you say, it's really cool that I get paid to do what I love, yeah. I think it's cool. I have tons of money. But also it [INAUDIBLE] like if you pay me half as much, I would still do it.

SEBASTIAN Yeah.

DETERDING:

AUDIENCE: I would still enjoy this as much, then it's more of a game.

SEBASTIAN So it's voluntariness less in terms of the empirical conditions, or you pay the amount. It's
DETERDING: voluntariness more than in terms of how do I perceive myself as I do this thing? Which isn't important at some point.

AUDIENCE: I feel that my time would be better used doing something else when it's a game. It's pretty useless.

SEBASTIAN Ah. That's interesting. So a game has to be a waste, is it, in some way.

DETERDING:

AUDIENCE: [INAUDIBLE] professional player, you have to make more money [INAUDIBLE].

AUDIENCE: Really?

AUDIENCE: Really? What are you going to do?

AUDIENCE: Like look at it honestly. Aside from some of the most recent tournaments and things like that where they've actually stepped up [INAUDIBLE], but a lot of that--

AUDIENCE: Like football players, right?

AUDIENCE: So yeah, you're stepping [INAUDIBLE]. Some might say conventional sports, and things like that, But what's your chances of making it there?

AUDIENCE: Well, I'm saying, if you're Tom Brady, you're not making any more money doing anything else. It's a horrible example. Brady keeps taking pay cuts. Man, [INAUDIBLE].

You're not going to get any more money doing something else, but it's still something they find [INAUDIBLE]. Does that mean they don't think of it like a game? I don't know. That steps into the same space that we were just at before where we're asking a question of if you're playing a sport, because that's what makes you all the money, and it's almost no longer in your own choice to do it, because this is the best possible option for your utility.

You make more money doing this. You're Tiger Woods. You make more money by playing golf than mowing your own lawn. So naturally, you pay somebody else to mow your own lawn.

Well, at a certain point in time, you make the most money by being filmed as if you were playing golf.

AUDIENCE: I really disagree with calling the game a waste.

SEBASTIAN Sure.

DETERDING:

AUDIENCE: And if I were to tweet that out right now to Anna Anthropy, she would kill me.

AUDIENCE: Fair enough.

AUDIENCE: People don't generally consider reading a book or reading a newspaper article a waste. But there are a lot of games that are like the equivalent of doing that. Like Anna Anthropy's games, pretty much just all of her games. Or like Squinkies games are all very-- they're meant to teach you something a lot more than the bottom right hand corner.

AUDIENCE: So I would say the idea of it being a waste can be more voluntary. I'm not playing this game because I need to do it to finish a graduation requirement. I'm playing this game, because it's a recreational thing. So in some sense, it's like games can be a waste so that's a really negative turn, but that gamification is usually framed into this is a.k.a. You should be doing, because its ulterior motive is [INAUDIBLE]. The market is something that has to be valuable in some other context than just the enjoyment of the experience. like you're being more fit or

learning more about something.

**SEBASTIAN
DETERDING:**

You're just describing the reverse case of what they were actually-- a couple of nice [INAUDIBLE] experiments about in the younger learning. In fact, when people say if you give somebody a reward for doing that, they will later on reconstrue why they did something. Oh, it was a good reward. Therefore, it cannot be something that I should do for its own sake, just because I enjoy doing it.

Or therefore, maybe I didn't do it for its own sake. So next time, I should expect [INAUDIBLE] for that so I'm less motivated to do it without a motivation the next time. So if you add an extrinsic reward [INAUDIBLE], it becomes less motivated to begin with, because you underline the perception of autonomy of the description [INAUDIBLE] to begin with. Whereas if you say well, if it's really wasteful, if I say there's nothing that comes out of it reliably, I can look at the situation and say, well if it's really wasteful, the only reason why I may do this is because I enjoy the [INAUDIBLE]; not because I'm getting a reward for that.

Ergo, this is an activity that I'm really [INAUDIBLE]. Therefore, if it's very autonomous, [INAUDIBLE], this is something where I fully just-- this comes to us out of my own personal beliefs, wishes, and goals, nothing else.

Or you could use the Calvinist version of that saying, this is a waste. I shouldn't do this. And by the fact that I put myself against the moral tub of a Calvinist culture around me that always wants to be productive, and so I intentionally [INAUDIBLE] completely wasteful to show you that I'm not always controlled by your damn culture. In the same way, you are reinserting your autonomy by doing something intentionally [INAUDIBLE], potentially. So yes, they're definitely in these psychological ways, intertwined.

AUDIENCE:

I'm curious if that means the example we said where they were being paid to play the game, but then they also played it in their days off.

**SEBASTIAN
DETERDING:**

Yeah.

AUDIENCE:

Then would it be a game when they played it on during their free time, but it's gamification when they do it as a job? The same exact game, with the same exact, enjoyment for the person playing it?

SEBASTIAN It's a good question, but I'll get to that in one second please.

DETERDING:

AUDIENCE: I think it's worth unpacking the word game, and that we're using it in two different senses. I think you might have just said there is the people who are planning to play the game for work, and then play the game for play. But when they're playing a game outside of the context of work, I think they might see it as I am playing a game right now, whereas that other thing they are playing, this game-- how do I describe it?

There's a difference between the game that everyone calls a game, this program system that everyone plays, and the activity of the person actually playing the game.

AUDIENCE: [INAUDIBLE] as a subset of [INAUDIBLE].

AUDIENCE: Right. Gold farming is a thing you can do in this system that we call a game, because people tend to play it. In that case, there are ways of playing the game that don't meet that normal expectation and might look like work. And then there's the normal way of playing the game that they return to on their own time that perhaps is more fun and less for this external reward.

SEBASTIAN
DETERDING: Yep. That is a very important one, and one that is especially in game study is usually completed that is the distinction between object and activity [INAUDIBLE] of engagement. Because [INAUDIBLE] like to say well, if I'm the toddler, I have no concept of game theory. I haven't been socialized into games, and I accidentally happen to hack under the chess computer, entering the exact commands that are legal commands based on the rules of chess.

Is the toddler playing chess? Or is the toddler toying around with the chess set, [INAUDIBLE] the concept of what playing the game of chess means? No, but those are free.

Give the toddler his [INAUDIBLE]. I'm trying to play chess here. In the same way, if I'm the usability engineer, and I am clicking my way through *Halo* in order to [INAUDIBLE] usability products. Am I playing *Halo*? Or am I testing *Halo*?

The activity that I'm engaged in-- and this is actually the court subject, what was the subject matter of my PhD research [INAUDIBLE], for exactly that kind of experience. The activity that they're engaged in is testing, even though the object they're operating with is a game. So keeping these two separate you could say well, it was the game. But maybe some points, when they felt oh, now I'm engaged in *World of Warcraft* in order to make money, they felt this

feels like-- it's still game play, what I do, but it's game play as work.

It's game play reorganized, reframed as working to me. So it's not really playing the game anymore. It's work playing. It's a weird mixture. It's a new type of activity, but it's not playing as we know leisure time [INAUDIBLE].

So that's definitely an important distinction. The second thing, or the final thing that I want to turn on, in terms of when it is something a game or a gamification? First thing to notice-- all of this was tested, and you could throw in new points, and you would get it to the same [INAUDIBLE]; yes, no, yes, no, yes, no. So how do we know if a term is correctly used for something or not? What determines whether a word is currently used within the device [INAUDIBLE] or not?

When is something correctly called oxygen? When is correctly or incorrectly identified as oxygen?

AUDIENCE: Shouldn't all these depend on the context?

SEBASTIAN How so?

DETERDING:

AUDIENCE: Because if you just give it time by itself, without much context, you can actually figure out if it is correctly used or not. So for example, oxygen, just given the word like that, I can say something like we all need oxygen to break.

SEBASTIAN Yeah.

DETERDING:

AUDIENCE: But then you can also say something else like too much oxygen can asphyxiate us.

SEBASTIAN Mhm.

DETERDING:

AUDIENCE: Actually, is that true?

[LAUGHTER]

SEBASTIAN I see what you mean. So definitely, whether a statement using the word is correct or not
DETERDING: depends on the total statement. Totally. Second point is so when is the term correctly used or

incorrectly used? How do we determine if the term's correctly or incorrectly used to identifying something-- a phenomenon, an object in the world, [INAUDIBLE].

AUDIENCE: I would say it's really hard to do that. And there's a reason. It's like oxygen, everyone's thinking here. It's also the name of a TV channel.

SEBASTIAN Yeah.

DETERDING:

AUDIENCE: And that's fully correct. It just felt like that. So I think the context of what you were saying is important.

So when you wrote that word down and asked that question, the answer was what you were thinking of, because it was in the context that you have. So we would have to figure out what context you were talking about and then answer that question correctly. But someone else could come up and ask the same question with a different context, and the answer would change.

And you could make this argument for almost every word. That's part of the reason why it's really hard to get computers to understand what humans are talking about, because you have to give them this context and the context. So I don't know if you can for sure define something like that.

I may run around with a different [INAUDIBLE].

SEBASTIAN OK. If you ask a scientist, a chemist, how do I identify whether something's correctly or
DETERDING: incorrectly called oxygen? How do you go about that?

AUDIENCE: And at that point, you claim that there's some fundamental principle of the object as such that you can identify about it that identifies it as oxygen. And so you can concoct some series of tests that allow you to verify the things that make it as such, because you have some set of rules. You verified against all the rules, and you claim that therefore, this thing's oxygen.

SEBASTIAN Scientists that basically were chemists in that case, have operationalized that concept. Or the
DETERDING: other way around the concept is defined by the very set of operationalization. So if it passes these tests, it counts as oxygen. That's how we define that term.

So that's the definition [INAUDIBLE], which works great for scientific constructs, if that's how

scientific concepts work basically. Now, what about something like delicious? When do I know whether the word delicious is correctly or incorrectly used to apply it to a given object?

AUDIENCE: Isn't that extremely subjective?

AUDIENCE: That's correct, and identify against everybody in the room and prove to them that that's delicious.

SEBASTIAN
DETERDING: [JOKINGLY] It is delicious when I tell you. Right. It's a subjective term. Delicious isn't true or untrue based on whether it passes a number of tests. Delicious is an expression of a subjective value experience.

If I find it delicious, I can use the term delicious. It would be incorrectly used if I used the word delicious, although I think this is their choice [INAUDIBLE], but it's delicious for me or not. What about as a kind of middle term?

It's not a middle term. This mixes all kinds of things. What about something like faux pas? A social faux pas or inappropriateness-- something like that. When is the words inappropriate and so faux pas appropriately used?

AUDIENCE: It both depends on the context and if it's subjective.

SEBASTIAN
DETERDING: How is it subjective?

AUDIENCE: In France, something might be illegal, or in the US, it is not.

SEBASTIAN
DETERDING: Yeah.

AUDIENCE: And depending on the context of the thing, of what happened, then even in the same country or same location with the same set of rules, it might be good or bad, depending on who is the person actually looking at it.

SEBASTIAN
DETERDING: Mhm. So I flush that out. It's something that we have, like a formal definition to the way that it works. There's a set of [INAUDIBLE] rules you're supposed to adhere to, a way that the context has been misinterpreted, or something of that nature. It's like using the word irony, or something like that. There's a specific formula for how you know something is [INAUDIBLE].

But past that, there's also still the fact that you have to identify it as such, and that's dependent on the context or the situation you read that inside of, because what it is in one situation may not be in another. And it's definitely my situation. It's highly situation dependent on [INAUDIBLE] culturally.

How to properly or improperly [INAUDIBLE] taken that into the business partisan [INAUDIBLE] different depending on the different cultures. I do this usually to how people think about-- if you'd look at a certain concept, is this more like a scientific construct? Is this more like a subjective value statement, or is this more a social convention?

And I would say games and gamification, because they weren't around before people were around. But it's still something that we use as a sure term to [INAUDIBLE]. And don't think that somebody can say for me, this is a game. For me, this is not a game.

Like you would say for me, this is delicious. For me, this is not delicious, that it's basically the social convention [INAUDIBLE]. This is this sure cultural sense of this is what a game is or shouldn't be. So to an extent, teasing out when is the game, or when is not a game. What you're doing here is basically you're doing social linguistics.

You're teasing out what are the conventions of a shared community of people what they consider to be a proper game or not? And then you run into all the [INAUDIBLE] cases where the language community in front of you. And you hear people say, is that a game I don't know? That's weird. That's odd.

It doesn't fit my prototype case of how games should be. And gamification presents us with all of these cases for real money trading and stuff like that that, [INAUDIBLE] all these cases that don't fit our existing social conventions of the category of gamers. And so therefore, we have all [INAUDIBLE], because their challenge-- they're an empirically new phenomenon that don't fit our existing conceptual categories.

I was [INAUDIBLE] existing categories. So to a certain extent when is it games, or when is it gamification? Let's see how society solidifies opinion around these terms. Right now, it's up in the air, to a certain extent.

Or that's what I suggest, so that's what I sometimes do. If I introduce an article I say, I'm not doing social [INAUDIBLE] here. I'm not trying to tease up what people think collectively, the way they police language together, whether this is a game or not, or whether this is an

unsettled matter [INAUDIBLE]. I use it as a scientific construct, and here is my operationalization of that scientific construct.

I use the term [INAUDIBLE]. It is supposed to mean that it's to pass the following tests. And if it fits these tests, it is gamification. If it doesn't fit these tests, it's game.

You can disagree with that. You can make up another operationalization. But in that sense, the meaning of the word is I use it in [INAUDIBLE] of this text.

Another interesting thing in a second. Another interesting thing is that is this still a game or not, or is this this or that is that you often conflict normative and descriptive [INAUDIBLE]. This isn't a game. If you look at [INAUDIBLE], it very often just means this is not a game I'm liking.

It doesn't mean that it doesn't fit the descriptive categories that you can say, according to this game theoretician, it's set up list the five defining criteria of whether it's a game or not. It fits the bill, but it's not a kind of game I'm liking. So if we say, is this still a game or gamification it often says is this a certain kind of game that I like versus the certain kind that I dislike, *Dido*?

AUDIENCE:

So if we're talking, in regards to the more subjective view of this distinction, I was wondering if you think whether or not a person looking at you for a game or a [INAUDIBLE] context, whether or not if they identify as the gamer, or if they had prior experience with even more traditional games will effect their typecasting of whether or not it's a game or a gamification. Will people who are more familiar with games recognize things that are more subtle and say oh, that's gamification faster?

Or is it they're more accustomed to it? They won't see it as much, and just wondering the different-- that would be like me or my mother basically.

**SEBASTIAN
DETERDING:**

There are lots of interesting [INAUDIBLE]. A, there is beginning data, especially when people do gamification [INAUDIBLE]. We find old people play games. They just don't play video games.

They play board games, card games, social games, all kinds of games. It's not as if they were not introduced to the concept. But they don't know the video game lexicon [INAUDIBLE] necessarily. So they don't know progress bars. They don't know achievements.

And so it's all of that [INAUDIBLE]. What's that then? What happens now? And I remember a former girlfriend of mine, the first time she played.

[INAUDIBLE] obviously, there were achievements. She was in the achievements screen and say, the game is broken. How do I get back?

She wasn't absolutely not introduced to the concept. And as gamification for the elderly do is they show data that indicates there is another nice little identification in the work place by [INAUDIBLE] molecule a bit that [INAUDIBLE], that people who are socialized into games tend to pick up gamification more easily or usually a bit more lenient towards it, whereas people who don't have a game of socialization are more [INAUDIBLE].

The second [INAUDIBLE]. Yeah?

AUDIENCE: This is going to sound really stupid coming out of my mouth, but are games these days gamified in the sense that so it takes me to the achievement system. That wasn't in games that should go back in time?

SEBASTIAN Yep.

DETERDING:

AUDIENCE: And now you see that it's now almost a requisite part of any game that comes out. A game doesn't come out without achieving things. A shooting game doesn't come without her filling health bars, and fields, and things like that. These tropes that define the topic itself necessarily comes reflexible with [INAUDIBLE] on it, and it's pointless to describe things as gamified and everything. Both games and non-games can have that slim set of [INAUDIBLE].

SEBASTIAN I said one of the things in terms of distinctions, you typically-- and I apologize for my terrible
DETERDING: handwriting. This isn't working [INAUDIBLE] involving AIDS for me. It is between descriptive and normative.

Are you using these terms of indescriptive or a normative way? I've seen a lot of people using gamification in a normative way. [INAUDIBLE] communication, evaluating that. Another one is if you do a descriptive way, how do you operationalize that definition if you say, it is gamification if it has certain features, like an achievement system.

Or is it gamification if it describes the outcome of a certain design process? Designers about to make something more [INAUDIBLE] about thinking about [INAUDIBLE] games to make this more fun. Then the out come of that, by definition of unification.

Or not even by the design process, just by the intention. Does the user see this as something

that is gamified or not? Or did the designer, in doing this, think about this as now I'm doing gamification or not, which answers the question that some people here ask saying well, how come this [INAUDIBLE] of ordinance called gamification, whereas we have the same kind of incentive schemes in the big corporations for decades before that?

And key performance indicators, this intelligence dashboard. Nobody called it gamification, even though it was the exact same thing. It comes down to how do you operationalize and formalize that [INAUDIBLE]? If you say it's dependent on tension and you say well, that wasn't the attention. This wasn't intended to be [INAUDIBLE], no matter what it was [INAUDIBLE].

If I define gamification by a certain feature list. So as long as it fits the feature list. Yes? So again, how do you define the term? And there, it follows the [INAUDIBLE].

**GABRIELLE
TREPANIER-
JOBIN:**

Maybe you can talk to kids about the debates around gamification, ideologies, governance, surveillance. Maybe it's not like you're an expertise, or I don't know.

**SEBASTIAN
DETERDING:**

If I talk about reproduction, like gamification of reproduction, that to me is an immediate outflow of [INAUDIBLE] gamification as government [INAUDIBLE].

**GABRIELLE
TREPANIER-
JOBIN:**

Mhm.

**SEBASTIAN
DETERDING:**

Definitely. So I'm happy to talk about governmentality and ideology. That's a good question. Other questions in the room right now?

We also have two more questions on the board. Sorry.

AUDIENCE:

I was going back to what you talked about earlier on the note of autonomy being the marker for whether something feels like a game or feels like gamification. I feel like autonomy is almost a loaded term, in this sense and that yes, you could have autonomy, and that when someone gives you a test, you can decide how to do it. And as long as you return the test in a finished state, then you're fine or whatever. But there's also not the autonomy where you can go against the logic of the system, which in this case, would be the logic of the business.

So I feel like in this example, it felt more like gamification or a bad attempt at gamification to these people, because the logic was pretty one directional. It was only ever increasing the end

product for the business, not letting OK. If I want to, I can have agency against the business. And that might have certain consequences, but it would still be like I already know the consequences beforehand as part of having some sort of agency.

**SEBASTIAN
DETERDING:**

This leads to an age old question in humanism. It goes back to Kant and the Enlightenment. It goes back to Aristotle.

That is the question, how do you not instrumentalize people? If you take the idea that people are self-determined actors, or that they can become-- we can help people race towards being self-driven actors. How can we not make them other determined actors in [INAUDIBLE]?

And that's actually an interesting question for me, because I started out working in civic education. And civic education very much, at least in Germany thanks to the Second World War, and then thanks to the Allied Forces occupying Germany and saying, we should learn a thing or two about democracy. So civic education in Germany, which originally was a democracy age that happens very interesting [INAUDIBLE].

How can we create a democratic state? Or can we educate people about democracy being a good thing without ourselves becoming a totalitarian rule? Without this itself becoming again, [INAUDIBLE]?

And the argument, or the point that civic education in Germany camp as the moral stem point which reflects the point that Aristotle had for education, in general-- how did we get to educate people to become really selfish [INAUDIBLE] is to say as long as for all intensive purposes, according to your own best knowledge and intentions you try to set up this system of education such that you enable the person going through that education at the end of it to make the independent judgment whether that education is actually the best possible thing happening to me, so retrospectively embracing what was done to [INAUDIBLE] saying afterwards, without you training me some discipline, I would have never developed the faculties in order to be able to be an independent flourishing [INAUDIBLE].

So thanks for that. That was actually good afterwards, even though during the process, I felt other [INAUDIBLE], and I hated it. But as long as you're doing it in my best interest, to bring me to the situation where you can reflexively look at what you did to me and then say, that was wrong. Let's change this.

So as long as everybody going through the system is the critical corrector that comes out to

look afterwards at the system that says this was actually good, or this was actually [INAUDIBLE] way to change the system. Then things [INAUDIBLE]. So that's the procedural order.

The system is built with the intention of making people critical-- changes of the system they themselves run through, then it's fine. Then it supports their independence and their autonomy [INAUDIBLE].

AUDIENCE: I see.

**SEBASTIAN
DETERDING:** There are very few businesses that do that that I'm aware of. That's in civic education. Oh there it is. That's the answer to it.

We'll get to governmentality, and we'll get to the two others on the board. Any other thing that you would like to be addressed? [INAUDIBLE] to worry about. Sweet. Then let's talk about governmentality very quick, and then about what is learning from games or gamification?

So can we do this interestingly or responsibly, and can I have some of it? So governmentality-- just a show of hands. Who knows the term governmentality? Yeah.

It's this ugly [INAUDIBLE] created by Michel Foucault, which was the bald, gay Frenchman. It was correct, right? Anything incorrect here--

**GABRIELLE
TREPANIER-
JOBIN:** It's correct.

**SEBASTIAN
DETERDING:** I can only say that, because I wrote my master's thesis chugging through old books of Foucault, so I feel I've earned saying that. Governmentality is basically-- there are lots of dimensions of how it's basically been played. But one part of that is to say modern liberal nation states, in specific, do not rule by punishment.

They do not rule by if you do x wrong, I'm going to whack you. Or if you do x well, I'm going to give you something. They rule by putting people into the mindset that they individually regulate themselves and that they believe. It's in their own best interest to regulate their own behavior that they internalize it.

It's a Freudian argument. It's not my parents telling me stuff to do. I have my inner parents

telling me that I'm horrible.

So in the same way, the state operates by getting you to internalize regulations so that the state doesn't have to inefficiently whack you the whole time. How does governmentality connect to games? Well, you can make the argument gamification is specific.

Well, we can make the argument, or I would make the argument that a big part of how current Western nation states manage to keep this governmentality is to tell us in order to realize ourselves. In order to be our best selves, in order to be all we can be, we have to self-manage. We have to self-optimize. We have to be productive, productive productive, and manage ourselves, and become ever more productive throughout.

And then gamification will quantify itself. All of these are basically tools society then gives us or people give us to say, these are ways in which you can manage yourself better, and these are ways in which you can monitor yourself better to make yourself evermore productive. And that was supporting and reinforcing the very societal system at which we're all kept to be as productive as we can be-- that way, actually regulating ourselves, instead of having other people have to regulate some of that form.

And then you can ask yourself, is that actually a society in which I want to live in? Do I subscribe to that? So that's my one minute stick on governmentality.

What is good learning from games, or what is good gamification? I tried in the Eudaimonic design article to tease that outwards, [INAUDIBLE] on how to do this well would look like, and there's another article out the lens of intrinsic skill [INAUDIBLE] right now on SSRM, and the proofs should fly around. Somewhere we've reached the [INAUDIBLE] journal.

But there's another article you could find online, the lens of intrinsic skill [INAUDIBLE] where I describe an actual design method. The basic things, I would say, is do not put the cart before the voice. That is if you're a good designer you do not say, this is a solution space, gamification. Now, where can I use it, but work the other way around.

Look at the problem and say, what problem do I try to solve in the context? So good, very practical example. A friend of mine uses for Fitbit, came in Rochester, Upstate New York.

She walked about 3,000 steps a day. She's now on a Fulbright in Croatia in Dubrovnik, and [INAUDIBLE]. Is that a sudden boost of motivation? Is that a sudden boost of willpower?

Is that because the Fitbit has a new feature or some new achievements to unlock? It's because if you try to get around in Dubrovnik with a car, it's the most complicated and inefficient way of getting around. And the city is basically just one huge flight of stairs.

So there is no way for you to do anything but walk through your whole day. So if I look, Step Trackers has this solution to people's lacking mobility. I say well, it's not as if Americans are slackers and Europeans are monsters of willpower. It's just when I was back in Hamburg, getting around in [INAUDIBLE] was the easiest, cheapest, most efficient way to get from A to B, so I was biking all the time.

And it was completely self-sufficient, because whenever I couldn't reach something with a bike, I could reach it with a well built out public transportation system. And drivers, therefore, were expecting that there were bikes all the time.

Here, especially in Rochester, which is a car city-- other way around. I couldn't bike, even if I wanted to. The city architecture works against me. Drivers not being used to that works against me. Wrong roads works against me.

So suddenly, I need all willpower to put myself against the friction of the environment to bike against all odds. So don't put the cart before the horse. Look at the problem and say oh, we actually have to change the zoning. If we introduce mixed zoning, people will walk, because there's an easier way between supermarket and home, and you will just walk the small ways [INAUDIBLE]. So that's the first part.

And then the second part is part of your analysis. So say to yourself, is motivation the issue? What games do well is indeed, motivate in certain ways. That are things that are fun and enjoyable to a lot of kids.

And look at the issue and say, is motivation really what is lacking here, motivation due to a lack of structure, due to a lack of frequent feedback, due to a lack of clearly explicated goals, due to a lack of interestingly varied challenge? And again, all of these are the components by which games actually create fun, engaging experience of competence being absorbed in the activity. If that's the case, great. Take structures from games.

Take those structures. Have better articulated goals. Have more frequent feedback. Vary the challenge in interesting ways so I don't do the same old thing over, and over, and over again.

If that's not the issue, why should you even try games? Again, using the wrong tool. Like 80%

of problems where I get flown in, I look at whatever software thinking they built and say, you have a usability issue. You don't have an engagement issue.

First people have to figure out where even to click before you have to motivate them to click, and that's hard, and [INAUDIBLE] interface. Let's fix that first. So that's the short answer. And the long answer then, look into that article, and I go into great lengths to [INAUDIBLE] one, what is it we can assure in games?

Any final questions?

**GABRIELLE
TREPANIER-
JOBIN:**

Thank you so much.

**SEBASTIAN
DETERDING:**

Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]