11 "Resist the Dictatorship of Malygos on Coldarra Island!"

Evidence of MMOG Culture in Taiwan's Sunflower Social Movement

Holin Lin and Chuen-Tsai Sun

As ludic social spaces that support player interactions in multiple dimensions, Massively Multiplayer Online Games (MMOGs) are distinctly different from other forms of social media such as *Facebook*, *Twitter*, and online blogs. Whereas *Twitter* has been used to support the creation, tagging, and sharing of reading content, with hashtags being created to promote or support social movements (Gleason, 2013), MMOGs, in comparison, facilitate game-like strategy deployment in a spatial occupation and defense situation that plays a critical role in the Sunflower Movement that occurred in the spring of 2014 in Taipei, Taiwan. In this chapter, we will describe how MMOG players experience 'bodily' interaction via their avatars, use versatile interactional materials to achieve various mission goals, and constantly interact with each other within what we will call *contentious cooperative frameworks*—not only on a daily basis, but over extended periods in communities that sometimes mostly consist of complete strangers. There is increasing evidence showing that MMOG gaming experiences exert profound influences on the online and offline social lives of players both microscopically (e.g. interpersonal interactions, see Boellstorff, 2015; Taylor, 2009; Williams et al., 2006) and macroscopically (e.g. collective actions, see Lin & Sun, 2011; Pearce, Boellstorff, & Nardi, 2009).

In this chapter, we will focus on the offline/macroscopic aspect, which consists of large-scale social connections and involvement in the physical world, using Taiwan's 2014 'Sunflower Movement' as a representative case to demonstrate how MMOG-associated experiences and social interaction patterns have the potential to play central roles in civil action. Specifically, we will show that during the protest, the real-time tools of *Facebook* and Google applications were used for information-sharing and other communication purposes as they have been in social actions in other countries, but more importantly, organizational and collaborative models and mobilization strategies were clearly influenced by the MMOG-playing experiences, literacies, and cultures of the protest participants.

From our analysis of movement socio-technological factors, we have identified four characteristics indicating familiarity with online game culture: game-like organization and collaboration; ease of collaboration with strangers; 'game tip' creation, usage, and distribution; and using game culture concepts to comprehend situations and to plan and take action. We also found that a significant number of movement organisers and participants had long affiliations with online games, providing them with skills that helped them sustain and expand the political action. We observed many instances of effortless transfer of skills and subculture knowledge acquired via gameplay when cooperating with strangers and when assigning and accepting tasks. Movement participants frequently used game metaphors and analogies that rendered complex political and economic issues accessible to other movement members and potential supporters. Spatial similarities between the blockade of the Taiwan Legislative Yuan and castle-siege activities that are common to MMOGs also illustrate the relevance of online gaming experiences to this particular physical world event. We should emphasise here that although the focus of our analysis is on this single event, our goal is to explain general connections between MMOG activities and social movement organization.

Sunflower Occupation Events – 18 March to 10 April 2014[1]

Although March 18 is officially considered the first day of the occupation, hundreds of university students were already camped outside the Taiwan Legislative Yuan to protest a Cross-Strait Service Trade Agreement (CSSTA) with China that was being considered at that time. Whereas the ruling Kuomingtang (KMT) party used the word 'debated', opposition lawmakers and many students believed that the agreement was being rushed through the legislature with insufficient opportunity for debate or public comment.

KMT members make a 30-second announcement declaring passage of the CSSTA, which triggers a loud reaction of protest among the camping students. Upon learning that the KMT had approved the agreement without proper discussion, students and members of the Democratic Front Against Cross-Strait Trade in Services Agreement (a nongovernmental organization alliance) and other public interest groups initiate a protest in front of the building that houses the Legislate Yuan. That evening, one group of protestors breaks through police barriers and enters the building via the Jinan South Road entrance. At the head of the group are two graduate students, Chen Wei-ting of National Tsing Hua University and Lin Fei-fan of National Taiwan University (NTU), plus members of a pan-university organization known as the Black Island Nation Youth Frontier. They hang banners and signs on and around the

rostrum, declare the successful start of an occupation, use furniture to block all entrances to the legislative chamber, and make three demands: an apology from President Ma Ying-jeou, the resignation of Premier Jiang Yi-hua, and the removal of police forces.

One student, who identifies herself as JO1YNN, uses her iPod to send messages to CNN iReport (http://ireport.cnn.com/docs/DOC-1108633). The original protestors surrounding the building and others in different locations throughout Taiwan use *Facebook* and various Bulletin Board Services for mobilization purposes. Based on news coverage and information shared via *Facebook*, tens of thousands of students and citizens fill the streets surrounding the government center in Taipei to express their support for the movement. An open sunflower is chosen as a symbol to express strong opposition to the hidden review process. Students from more than 100 universities eventually join the movement. One NTU professor, Fan Yun, encourages 43 of her colleagues to hold their classes outside the Legislative Yuan, teaching on the topics of democracy, civil disobedience, and human rights. The occupying students establish rules encouraging nonviolence.

On March 23, President Ma Ying-jeou rejects the students' demand to reassess the service trade agreement in a manner where open debate can be monitored. In response to the five-day standoff, more than 200 students use pieces of cardboard and bed sheets to climb over barbed-wire barricades to enter the Executive Yuan, the Taiwanese equivalent of cabinet offices. The 40 police officers present cannot stop the students, but later that evening an estimated 1,500 police officers dressed in riot gear use water cannons to storm the building and remove the students, injuring many in the process. An estimated 1,000 students occupy the area in front of the building, with 6,000 students and citizens nearby. It takes six waves of riot police to gain control. Smartphone images of bloodstained students and citizens spread rapidly via social networks and mass media outlets. Some evicted civilians return to the Executive Yuan with the intention of reentering the building, but are forced to leave.

At 4:00 a.m., police forcefully remove media representatives from the area. Riot police continue to beat unarmed students, who continue to practice nonviolent resistance, and use water cannons at the front and side gates of the Executive Yuan. Crowds of protestors gather and confront the police outside the east and west gates. As civilians continue to gather, the police use water cannons for a third time, forcing the crowd back to Qingdao East Road. Many bloodied civilians tell the media that the police attacked peaceful protesters. Several videos of police brutality are streamed on the Internet.

On March 25, 11 Taiwanese citizens call for a crowd-funding project using the Flying V platform to purchase newspaper ads in the *Apple Daily Taiwan* and *New York Times* to spread awareness of the Sunflower

Movement. Under the slogan, "Why are they here?" the ads list reasons for protesting the behind-the-door CSSTA negotiations. The ads proclaim that while "blood has been shed, the future is too bright for us to abandon it [the movement]". The first $1.5 million New Taiwan dollars (approximately USD50,000) for the front-page *Apple Daily* ad is raised in 35 minutes. Within 3 hours, $6.7 million NT dollars are raised to purchase a full-page ad in the *New York Times*. A total of 3,621 people make contributions.

On the afternoon of March 30, 500,000 Taiwanese citizens put on black shirts and appear on the streets to attend a protest rally against the trade agreement and police crackdown. Black shirts are chosen as a symbol of the dark night preceding democratic sunlight in Taiwan.

On March 31, President Ma and the Executive Yuan once again reject the students' demands. However, KMT Policy Director Lin Hung-chih and KMT Legislator Chang Ching-chung apologise publically for the way that the legislation was handled. Lin also resigns from his position as KMT party whip, submitting his resignation to President Ma, who is the party chairman.

The following day, Chang An-le, a former gangster known as "White Wolf", leads a pro-CSSTA rally with hundreds of Taiwanese, and threatens to physically retake the building – in his words, "return the legislature" from the student occupiers. His group is blocked by 500 riot police well away from the building, and the counterprotest ends at 5:00 p.m.

On April 5, the occupying students renewed their demand that the government to give official responses to what they call the "People's Council Reports". Written by the students, the reports contain information about the CSSTA deliberations compiled from a variety of sources. Student leader Lin Fei-fan describes the reports as a comprehensive review of the CSSTA process emerging from group discussions by more than 1,000 citizens – what he calls an example of true participatory democracy of much higher quality than the legislative decision-making that preceded the Sunflower Movement. Scholars and experts give detailed explanations of the major differences between the student-citizen's and Executive Yuan's versions of a "Cross-strait Agreement Monitoring Act". Nineteen discussion groups are organised.

The following day, Legislative Speaker Wang Jin-pyng visits the students in the Legislative Yuan and promises to enact a law to monitor the process of cross-strait pacts before the legislature begins a new review of the CSSTA. The students consider this statement as a substantial sign of progress because it actually responds to what they consider their most important demand. They express expectations that the ruling and opposition parties will follow Wang's example and adhere to the constitutionally stated requirements of legislative self-discipline and supervision.

On April 7, the students announce their intention to leave the Chamber in three days. On the 21st day of the occupation, student

leader Chen Wei-Ting declares that the movement has completed the initial stage of its mission, and that it has achieved substantial progress on all four of the students' primary demands. According to Chen, the students pledged to leave the chamber and travel throughout Taiwan to plant seeds for a new democratic movement that will ensure that legislators from all political parties on the island fulfill their promises to pass legislation for a cross-strait oversight mechanism, and to halt all CSSTA review activities until the monitoring legislation is passed. The students also call on opposition parties and their legislative caucuses to renew their promises to keep the ruling party in check, and to stop the Ma government from further damaging the country's political system. Last, they demand that the civilian version of the oversight mechanism bill be deliberated, and that the version proposed by the Executive Yuan be removed from the table.

On April 10, as promised, the student activists file out of the Legislative Yuan and distribute sunflowers to the cheering crowds, vowing to spread the movement throughout Taiwan. Before leaving the main Assembly Hall at 6:00 p.m., they proclaim that their departure does not mean that they are giving up their beliefs or their demands. According to student leader Lin Fei-fan, "This movement for democracy that began on March 18 is a continuation of Taiwan's history of resistance and quest for freedom that has been ongoing for more than 100 years. We will continue the story, and we will never back down or give up".

Theoretical Perspectives

Our analysis of the Sunflower Movement involves new media practices and interactional frames in social movements. Jenkins (2009) notes that daily practices based on new media platforms offer a set of cultural competencies and social skills for individuals to participate in their community lives, resulting in a new type of participatory culture. The Sunflower Movement is an example of how various dimensions of new media literacy can serve as technical and social foundations for large-scale action. The participants constantly navigated across media platforms to select and integrate information in various formats and to make sense of it. They created posts about their involvement on social networking sites, thereby motivating their friends to take to the streets and show support. They broadcast information on the progress of offensive/defensive actions in support of making collective yet distributed decisions and coordinating groups of people who had never met. They used live-streaming technology to attract international media attention to ongoing events. These practices exemplify a broad range of new media usage and social competencies associated with online gaming experience (Kowert, 2015), and the ways that they supported the movement in terms of communication and organization.

However, focussing solely on the use of communication technologies would overlook aspects of self-organised role-playing, distributed collective problem-solving, and collaboration among a large number of individuals who previously had never met in person. In terms of social mechanisms, MMOGs support social networking for connection and sharing, and provide cultural materials for collective immersion and creation. More importantly, in addition to the functionalities shared by popular online cultural communities, online gaming has contributed new cognitive frameworks for collective interaction that are now considered pervasive in both game and physical worlds. In particular, MMOGs provide a cognitive schema for the contentious collective interactions and contentious cooperative frameworks described previously (e.g. Gee, 2003; Steinkuehler, 2008). Such interactions include offensive and defensive positions taken by competitive parties as well as within-group negotiation and collaboration. These configurations have significant implications for real-world collective social and political action. In gaming worlds, MMOG players are used to participating in contentious situations in the dungeons, arenas, and battlefields that constitute the majority of online gaming activities. As they become skilled and level up, they become increasingly literate in terms of social space because of the value that they give to game-related social activities and associated social status. More importantly, they develop community role identities through ongoing practice, which in turn reinforces their collective cognitive framework. Thus, when something happens in the physical world that reminds them of similar game world situations, players have a sense of what kinds of corresponding actions and cooperation patterns are required.

Game cultures have crossed popular cultural boundaries to become central aspects of daily life for millions of players worldwide. Raessens (2014) describes the "ludic turn" in contemporary media studies – an indicator of the ways that individuals are adopting game world language, rules, and mechanisms to construct and interpret physical world phenomena. When describing failed actions in contentious group activities such as political campaigns, we now hear or read comments such as, "I'm not afraid of god-like enemies, but I'm really afraid of pig-like teammates". When political figures draw unexpected attention to provocative statements that they make, they are now often described as accidentally using 'multiple-target taunting' – a common MMOG tactic of attracting the attention of a mob to protect one's teammates from attack. Once, during a political debate when a political leader took criticism of a general political practice as a personal affront, we noticed that one reader in the comments section wrote that "the critic accidentally pulled the boss when combating with the mobs".

These examples reveal the shared cognitive schema or mental model that penetrates both game and physical worlds. Individuals who are

gaming-literate are increasingly appropriating rich vocabulary and innovative interactional frames in their daily (especially social) activities. The Sunflower protesters are examples of ludic turns in varied social dimensions ranging from playful communication to playful real-world collective action. We noticed that when specific instances of political content were easily transformed into personalised gaming concepts, they served as triggers for quick reactions – for example, the decisions to surround and defend the Legislative Yuan–activated cognitive frameworks associated with castle sieges and tower defenses. Contentious cooperative frameworks linked with game cultures provide a rich supply of tools to be used in physical situations involving social movements, political conflicts, and election campaigns. Online games represent a form of social media; therefore, information regarding issues, knowledge, tools, and influences can be readily distributed via texts, tweets, YouTube mashups, bulletin board posts, and, most significantly, the game worlds themselves, in which online gamers have expertise. On the one hand, the young generation is more capable of taking advantage of new communication technologies, in other words, they are more technologically savvy; on the other hand, we believe online gaming experiences provide them with extra capacity for handling such situations.

When examined from the perspective of a social movement, the Sunflower protest also reveals the implicit yet constructive roles of online gaming technologies and gaming experience. Bennett and Segerberg (2012) note that traditional social movement organizations are now empowered by communication technologies and social networks to become technology-enabled networks, with traditional collective action frames evolving into personal action frames for collective or connective actions. This new structure enables micro-coordination and flexibility in terms of social movement assembly and dispatch. Further, it supports a decentralised organizational structure so that the mobilization capability of a core groups becomes less critical for social movement success.

Fun is another central element in online gaming that apparently is shared in new-style social movements. According to Steinkuehler (2008), games are examples of 'push technology', which encourages players to explore general technology such as computers, and online affinity groups that emerge around games function as push communities that inspire participants to involve in other communities in different contexts. Game-related technology and organization penetrate player social involvement in a pleasant way, which affects game social movement characteristics. As MMOGs instantiate notions of social construction, they also endow real-world social reform with competence and fun. In light of online gaming, collective action and social movement may no longer take the conventional rational game form of agreeable n-prisoner dilemmas (Hardin, 1971), in which free riders present a great uncertainty to threaten the success of the movement, but of innovative

practices in the ludic culture, in which the participants identify themselves as players who should identify their separate roles and then have fun in the process.

Findings and Analysis: Technology Usage and Online Game Culture

Data were gathered from news media, online forums, online game dialogues, social media posts, and journal articles published during and after the mass action. The evidence strongly supports the idea that information technology in the form of *Facebook*, *Twitter*, instant messaging, and PTT (an online bulletin board favored by many Taiwanese youth) was a key factor in the success of the Sunflower Movement. These tools were used to update information, distribute press releases, refute false and potentially damaging rumors, discuss various issues, and announce spontaneous protest actions. Smartphones and tablets were used to broadcast planned protest sites and to record instances of excess force on the part of the police. Cellphone flashlights were central to the celebration at the end of the Sunflower action (Chao, 2014).

Looking beyond the communication technologies, one finds roots of the movement's success in online gaming culture – an observation that sharply contrasts with organizational and inspirational aspects of traditional social movements. We have identified four major characteristics of the movement that indicate familiarity with online game culture.

Game-like Organization and Collaboration

The Sunflower Movement clearly borrowed from the participants' game culture experiences for purposes of empowerment. The occupation and defense of the Legislative Yuan complex was similar to a castle siege mission. We found that core members of the movement, most belonging to an inter-campus organization known as the Black Island Youth Society, had considerable teamwork experience accumulated from their previous protest activities. They resembled the members of an elite player guild for newcomers to admire and follow. From our data, it appears that movement supporters recognised the occupation situation based on their new media literacy (especially that which is online game-related), and played their assumed roles. Together, they successfully transformed a game fan-like community into a successful, if short-lived, real-world political movement.

Our evidence indicates that movement members relied less on a hierarchical command structure and more on dynamic organizational structures and collaborative patterns that resemble those commonly used in MMOGs such as *World of Warcraft (WoW)*. In *WoW* and similar games, all players exist as independent units with specific skills who collaborate

to overcome barriers and to execute group tasks such as raids, which are considered representative of MMOGs. Players choose roles (e.g. tanks, healers, damage deliverers) that they execute individually while reacting collectively to evolving situations. In other words, players share a 'functionality template' that can be reassembled and modified for different missions. Their responsibilities include identifying the current situation, establishing their roles, and communicating with related parties according to their shared mental model. In this process, there is no need to wait for hierarchical orders to take action, and no need to report to designated commanders to modify strategies.

In one Sunflower Movement example, a group of students determined that their best action was to block a small lane near the legislative complex to hinder the movement of the police. Before this action, group members were complete strangers to each other. Their spontaneous action did not require material supplies, nor did it receive any attention from the media. We heard of numerous similar small-group actions like this one throughout the occupation.

Collaboration with Strangers

The recent development of random team-formation mechanisms in MMOGs encourages players to participate in shared mental models in support of efficient networking. The core Sunflower Movement event resembled a MMOG castle siege in that participants had to work with a large number of strangers toward a shared goal. To negotiate and coordinate with new acquaintances, movement participants were required to have knowledge of how to use multiple communication channels. Those familiar with game play were accustomed to performing multiple concurrent tasks in an efficient manner. Such experiences with organization ecology benefited the movement's many teams, including multilingual press liaisons and specialists in social media, research, technology support, logistics, and security, among others. There is evidence indicating that this organizational model resists misinformation: because information is more openly distributed, it is easy to verify via multiple channels, thus reducing the risk of rumors being spread.

When calling for support in a dungeon or on a battlefield, players must have confidence that teammates, even unknown strangers, will provide support via roles that they automatically recognise and fulfill. Such dynamic deployment and adjustment among strangers occurred multiple times during the legislative chamber occupation, and we believe that this could only have taken place because participants shared a mental model from their experiences with digital technology, especially MMOGs.

Game Tip Creation, Usage, and Distribution

Successful social movements must attract new participants and distribute information regarding past and current experiences. One MMOG-rooted practice that we observed in the Sunflower Movement was player-created tips for newcomers. Two major challenges encountered by the students were understanding and interpreting the detailed and technical nature of the legislation they were protesting, and convincing the stability-loving Taiwanese public that their occupation was both constitutionally legitimate and nonviolent.

Towards these goals, the students created a large number of text articles, slideshows, and tool kits for distribution via the web—an activity that any MMOG player would recognise. MMOGs are complex systems with few or no stated goals, rules, or official manuals or guidebooks. Instead, experienced players create walkthroughs and treasure maps, and provide graphic- or video-based tips to less experienced players on topics such as leveling-up, and distribute them via game forums. This practice empowers beginners in a much more efficient manner than formal instruction from official game managers. Two examples of these kinds of tool kits are shown in Figure 11.3, one listing the key factors of the service trade agreement and its hidden effects on various social sectors, the other an FAQ about occupation activities, giving participants and supporters evidence-based arguments that they could use with the media, opponents, or relatives. That these tips were provided by volunteers reflects a common gamer community practice, therefore participants quickly became aware of the tool kits and where to find them.

Using Game Culture to Understand Situations and to Take Action

Sunflower Movement activists and supporters also demonstrated their knowledge of MMOG game culture linguistically, especially in the use of game-related metaphors in their communications. These observations serve as evidence of how games have become part of the cognitive schema of adolescents and young adults for interpreting real-world events as well as for strategising, taking action, and persuading friends to join their activities. Examples of game-based metaphors include 'endless monsters' (associated with the *Hit the Gopher* game interface) to describe political issues and politicians; 'evil boss' to describe government in general; and analogies for unfair deals from popular games such as *League of Legends* and *Tower of Saviors* to describe aspects of the legislation they were protesting.

In one instance, a player used the public channel in *WoW* to criticise Sunflower Movement participants as 'Taliban.' This comment was immediately followed by multiple responses, including one call to "resist

Malygos' dictatorship on Coldarra Island!" The reference is to Taiwan as an island country: Malygos is the name of a *WoW* boss in the form of a blue dragon, and the color blue is linked with Taiwan's ruling KMT party. It is a comment that only the current generation of Taiwanese gamers could appreciate.

Conclusion: The Interplay Between Participatory Culture and Social Movement

During the Sunflower Movement, we witnessed many examples of the current digital generation's participatory culture, leading us to conclude that MMOGs played a critical role in preparing collective action frames for participants who were largely strangers to each other, but whose situated identities resulted from online gaming literacy. If the social movement is positioned in a larger cultural context, online gaming experiences clearly provided participants with cultural resources for interaction, thus supporting their efforts to recruit 'familiar strangers' to become teammates. Various tips were provided for social movement newbies to help them quickly understand the details of the primary motivation and to take part in self-organised actions. These practices are especially effective in spatial strategic situations and for executing tasks tied to short-term goals. According to our evidence, individual gaming experiences have become new frames for cultural cognition.

Our Sunflower Movement observations confirm Benford and Snow's (2000) assertion that in contrast to the commonly used approaches of resource mobilization and political opportunity, framing is a more relevant and/or useful concept for analysing contemporary social movement dynamics. Our micro-perspective, based on Goffman's (1974) interactional frames concept, supports an analysis of how movement participants with general online gaming literacy perceive themselves and their situations while negotiating their identities in public encounters within settings that in some ways resemble those found in MMOGs. Thus, when the spatial arrangement of a confrontational situation resembles a dungeon or battlefield, it may trigger connections between gaming experience and civil action. It is likely that the gaming literacies of Sunflower Movement participants prepared them with terminology, tools, and cultural repertoires that supported their ability to recognise roles and interactional frames, and to act accordingly.

As noted in a 2008 Pew report, young players who take part in game-related social interactions tend to be more engaged in civic and political affairs (Lenhart et al., 2008). During data collection for this and other research projects, we have found that online MMOG players regularly comment about current issues on game-related public channels—evidence of political awareness as well as the potential for participation in collective actions. Further, daily cooperative practices in MMOGs support player

education in terms of quickly and flexibly collaborating with strangers – a development that supports the autonomous unfolding of new political and social actions such as the Sunflower Movement that are characterised by spatial occupation and two-party confrontations. This phenomenon contrasts sharply with traditional movements, which are heavily dependent upon preorganization on the part of core political groups.

Further, Sunflower Movement evidence and observations also support a broader perspective for analysing and understanding online gaming practices and culture, shifting the focus away from individual entertainment and toward community involvement in both physical and virtual worlds. Most contemporary MMOG players do not consider their time investments and participation in game communities as examples of social displacement that conflicts with their physical social lives, but as equally valuable and mutually penetrative as their offline activities. Social movement practices, empowered and constrained by participatory culture, offer a new and rich platform for layered investigations of an increasingly ludified society.

Note

1 A Chinese-language chronology of the Sunflower events is available at http://infographic.appledaily.com.tw/project/2014032701.

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12 Between Drudgery and "Promesse du Bonheur"

Games and Gamification

Mathias Fuchs

Gamification receives the most enthusiastic praises of leading to a "pleasure revolution" (Schell, 2011) and is at the same time dismissed as "bullshit" by others (Bogost, 2011). It seems that the appreciation of the process of turning extraludic activities into play is valued controversially and that the range of hopes and fears connected to the phenomenon range from extremely negative to utmost beneficial. This difference in opinion can be traced back to the classical positions in regard to games and play. Games can be valued in two different ways: Following Bataille (1975), we would hope that play could be a flight line from the servitude of the capital-labour relationship. Following Adorno (1970) and Benjamin (1939), however, we might discover that the escape from the drudgery of the worker leads to an equally alienating drudgery of the player. I argue that gamification might be seen as a form of ideology, but that games and gamification also hold the potential for change. Ever since the notion of gamification was introduced widely (Deterding, Dixon, Khaled, & Nacke, 2011; Reilhac, 2010; Schell, 2011), scholars have suggested that it is the mechanism of choice to turn playful activities into activities with an impact. This article analyses the controversial dialectics of self-contained play for play's sake and the ubiquitous notion of gamification as a purpose-driven activity that might actually trigger and shape social change.

Good Gamification

Similar to the cure-alls of medieval charlatans, the panacea of gamification was said to have an unlimited range of possible application areas and unrestricted trust and loyalty by the consumers: Gamification can "combine big data with the latest understanding of human motivation" (Paharia, 2013); "make living eco-friendly a lot more interesting" (Sexton, 2013); "can help children learn in the classroom, help build and maintain muscle memory, fight against some of the effects of aging, and distract from pain and depression" (Ramos, 2013); "When we're playing games, we're not suffering" (McGonigal, 2012b). These promises contain a *promesse du bonheur*, a prospect for better living, and the suggestion that gaming can