Wrecking the Game

The Artist as Griefer

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims at examining the *anti-game* practice of artists that assume a subverting behaviour inside video games. They hijack gameplay to turn it into a space for artistic intervention. The artists discussed in this paper are Kent Sheely, Marque Cornblatt, Justin Berry, and Alan Butler. Their practice shares similarities with the artistic interventions developed by Dada and International Situationist, two artistic movements that aimed at redefining the culture of their time thanks to subversive actions. The artists featured in this paper are defined *griefers*, deliberate hecklers. Their works are then analysed along with the concepts of *counter-gaming* and *ludic mutation* defined by Alexander Galloway and Anne-Marie Schleiner to better understand the characteristics of their subversive behaviour.

Keywords

subversion, video games, counter-gaming, ludic mutation, in-game photography, machinima

INTRODUCTION

Video games cast players in seemingly boundless environments in which they can act and move freely. However, this freedom is just an illusion. The sense of empowerment they provide is mere make-believe. The game's rules and mechanics impose additional constraints. Nevertheless, these can be broken and hijacked by users. This paper aims at examining the processes through which artists redefine the ludic space using subversive actions. Artists violate the ludic *apparatus* applying a rebellious behaviour, performing a *counter-action* against the gameplay. By breaking its normal flow, the game is deprived of its essential characteristics, especially *interactivity* and *competitiveness*, and turned into a space that can convey new meanings. According to Alexander Galloway, the game is "a vast clustering of variables ready to be altered and modified" (2006, 112). Following this idea, this paper discusses the practice of four artists that I call *anti-game* since the usual codes of interaction are subverted to create a space for contemplation and inaction. This essay focuses on the following artists: Kent Sheely, Marque Cornblatt, Justin Berry, and Alan Butler. This essay will examine the gesture of insubordination of their practice thanks to a selection of artworks composed of machinima and photographs. In these works of art, they behave as *griefers* as they take over the gameplay refusing to follow the designers' rules. As Dada and Situationist artists aimed at redefining the culture, the society and the city of their time with rebellious gestures, these artists rethink the gameplay: by hijacking it and by working within the given constraints, they have found a way to subvert and dismantle the gameplay without manipulating its visual aesthetic or the software.

FROM THE ARROGANCE OF THE GAMEPLAY TOWARDS A LUDIC MUTATION

In the seminal book *Truth and Method*, Hans-Georg Gadamer investigates the concept of *game* in the attempt of defining its essence. His inquiry is supported by the one concerning the essence of art: according to Gadamer, the work of art becomes an experience that changes the observer. The significance of a work of art operates on the viewer modifying his personality permanently. At the same time, the game's essence is separate from the consciousness of the players. According to Gadamer, "the attraction of a game, the fascination it exerts, consists precisely in the fact that the game masters the player. [...] The real subject of the game is not the player but instead the game itself" (2006, 106). He illustrates the supremacy of the game over the consciousness of the player: the game entraps him within itself and makes him play its own game. The player accepts to play according to the game's rules, so both of them establish a deal between each other. By accepting this agreement, the player is trapped within the game losing his individuality and agrees to follow gameplay mechanics. Gameplay is a space with a strict set of rules and constraints in which the player has to act. At first glance, he has the freedom to explore the environment as he wishes but actually, his decisions are predefined and directed by non-negotiable rules. Video games, usually, are structured according to a goal-driven logic that leads to the resolution of the game. In the essay *Videogame Art As Anti-Competitive Expression*, Ted Levine asserts:

> *Progressing through the videogame from point A to B isn't a journey – it is a fight. While the player is able to creatively explore the virtual world that the game designers have constructed, the priority of the game moulds the player's approach to the game as a challenge to develop and perfect his or her abilities to reach the next level. Because the player is rewarded a significant amount of points for moving through the game in the "correct" manner, the player's interest in winning becomes the ultimate reason to continue. To win means reaching point B; thus, the act of getting to this point is irrelevant* (Levine, 2010).

His point of view describes a considerable number of commercial video games, whose distinctive aspect is connected to the demand for a continuous interaction required by the player. Even if often players have an impressive selection of decisions to make in order to influence the game's narrative, their input is relatively unremarkable. The game's narrative path, with all its different branches, has been structured *ex ante* and the player is asked to take action within an environment that can explore freely. However, this is a kind of exploration dictated by the will to complete the various objectives that the gameplay throws at him. Video games make players believe to be in control and to have the authority to choose. But this is just an illusion created to entrap them within the gameplay and subordinating their actions and intents to the rules. But what happens when players try to gain back control over the game? What happens to the video game when players decide not to follow the rules and to break the deal? In *The Player's Power to Change the Game* Anne-Marie Schleiner embarks on a detailed analysis of those cases in which video games have been deprived of their hegemony thanks to a *transformative process* carried out by the player, which is called *ludic mutation* (Schleiner, 2017). According to Schleiner, the player's power lies in his ability of creation and modification of the gameplay. The ones who undertake this shift of power do not see video games and their gameplays as an environment composed of fixed and imperturbable elements, they understand them as *play material* (Schleiner, 2017) that is waiting to be arranged differently.

An Anti-Game Practice

The artists discussed in this paper were chosen because of the peculiarity of their subversive actions: they do not use the game's editor to change its features or appearance, they do not manipulate the software or the code. Moreover, they do not embark on a search for bugs and glitches, a common practice among artists. Sheely, Cornblatt, Berry, and Butler subvert the expected way of playing a video game and reject the predefined gameplay. By exploiting both the game environment and the characters, they realise odd and unusual productions, outcomes of precise interventions which are translated in different ways. Sometimes they perform weird behaviors that refuse the standard (Marque Cornblatt). In other cases, *flanerie* seems the best way to pay attention to aspects and details considered banal and designed to go unseen (Justin Berry and Alan Butler), while some extreme examples present characters deprived of their ability to act (Kent Sheely). These gestures are possible because they are firstly gamers, so they know the rules and the conventions that usually govern the gameplay and this knowledge allows them to create new spaces for experimentation. In these artistic interventions, the artist wrecks the game from the inside gaining the ability to take over the gameplay. This subversive gesture is described here as an *anti-game* practice, which is strongly connected to the idea of *counter-game* developed by Alexander Galloway, an essential concept to define de nature of the actions highlighted in these works. In *Gaming. Essays On Algorithmic Culture* Galloway describes the *counter-game* idea as a wide range of practices that intend to modify the game according to three points of view: visual design, game's rules and software. It generates six different binary oppositions but, according to the analysis carried out by this essay, the number six is the most important: *gamic action vs radical one*, hence the traditional gaming poetic against an alternative use of the gameplay. This position is significant since it is the only one that can allow a different understanding of the gameplay, generated thanks to the definition of a new grammar of action caused by a radical act. According to Galloway, *counter-gaming* can be implemented only if the radical action goes beyond the pure visual change to re-write the architectural flow of play and the video game becomes *building material,* losing its normal function. In his text the author cites also a thought by Katie Salen, which rightfully describes what happened to the gameplay "Spaces once designed for player interaction, in fact spaces that only gained meaning through interaction, are transformed into spaces to be seen and watched, rather than played" (2006, 108).

The artworks here analysed reveal a practice that I call *anti-game*, which is hidden under the deceptive surface of a gameplay that seems to be played according to the standard. This is an intervention that tests and pushes the boundaries of the game system thanks to direct interventions within the game environment, aiming at uprooting the interaction and the competitiveness from the gameplay by choosing not to take action and not to follow a goal-driven logic. It changes the game's syntax setting up moments in which assembles the ludic environment in new ways. During the XXI century avant-garde movements started to conceive their artistic practice through the logic of performances and interventions of different nature. These were carried out in public space in order to strongly manifest the will to subvert the established culture, starting from its internal norm. Actions implemented by movements such as Dadaism and International Situationist hijacked the artistic practices of their time to develop a new grammar of action in line with their artistic vision. At the same time, the artists discussed in this paper use interventions to overthrow the existing standard of the game and alter the environment they are working with by reframing its system and developing a new grammar. Moreover, the peculiarity of the subversive action of Sheely, Cornblatt, Berry, and Butler relies on the fact that the *anti-game* is performed silently, under the surface, but its efficacy echoes all over the gameplay generating an interruption of its flow.

At first glance, gameplay seems to be the same since they are acting within its possibilities, that is, the range of behaviours conceived by the game designer that are also embedded in the code. However, these artists are not changing the game's fixed rules by operating on the code: they are using this exact range of actions to shift and subvert the game's parameters going against the culturally expected behaviours of a player. The intervention they perform is no longer a ludic one, they are not showing their abilities as players, amplifying the way in which a game can be played or celebrating any features. Instead, they perform interventions that produce something odd and unexpected: the *anti-game* practice produces moments released from the game itself because they are no longer playing it, rather they are playing *with* the game. Its system of rules is hijacked and assembled in unexpected ways to pursue artistic objectives thanks to interventions that question the possibilities of the game itself as a medium and reflects on different topics.

THE ARTIST AS A GRIEFER
Schleiner compares her notion of the ludic mutation to the practice of the Situationist Artists and their approach to games, defining the situationist player as a *creative cheater*. This epithet could be used to define the artists here discussed but it doesn't resonate very well with the characteristics of the *anti-game* practice previously described. Kent Sheely, Marque Cornblatt, Justin Berry, and Alan Butler subvert the gameplay by performing actions allowed by the game environment so technically, they are not cheating. I find their profile more similar to the *trifler* described by Bernard Suits (2005, 57): a quasi-player who conforms to the rules of the game, whose moves are legal because he is acting inside the game institution, but he refuses its objectives (*prelusory goal*). A trifler acknowledges the game's rules because he is performing actions within the game's bounds, but not its ends. This behavior leads him to play something similar to a game, but not exactly the game itself. However, the artists discussed in this paper are defined *griefers*, a much more stronger word often used to identify players in multiplayer video games who aims at performing disruptive actions to intentionally disturb other users and the whole game system, leaving its objectives in the background. Here, the definition is applied in a slightly different way to describe artists that perform actions that are legal inside this particular system of rules, in order to disrupt it from the inside and create moments released from the game. Their interventions extract fragments of gameplay that could delude the observer since they seem regular game excerpts. Actually, the *anti-game* practice operates under the surface, twisting the video game's logic to turn these moments into something independent from the game narrative. This behaviour can be traced back to the beginning of the *avant-garde* movements of the XX century, where artists' use of interventions performed in public spaces shook the established culture, up to the culture jamming tactics of activist artists carried out both in urban and virtual environments. Kent Sheely, Marque Cornblatt, Justin Berry, and Alan Butler are defined *griefers* because they act as hecklers, who uses on purpose the rules of a system to cause an interruption within the normal flow of the gameplay using different tactics to subvert its fundamental grammar and using the designed constraints to open up spaces with new meanings and perspectives.

The artworks presented in the following sections, even if one different from another, show however a common and important characteristic, which resides in the nature of the *anti-game* practice: all of them have a double nature, they carry both a *pars destruens*, and a *pars construens*. The subversive gesture performed in the selected photos and machinima needs to hijack and destroy the standard gameplay first, to create than something new. This act of destruction is not an end itself; instead, it is the primary step that has to be made to accomplish the ludic mutation and the redefinition of the game grammar. Destruction is fundamental to prepare the ground for artistic creation.

However, to subvert the standard, an artist has to know very well its codes and rules in order to force them. These artists are first players, and they comprehend the kind of constraints and boundaries set by the game designer and know how video games work. This knowledge leads them to break the game and prepare the ground for the settlement of a new grammar for their *anti-game* practice. Kent Sheely, Marque Cornblatt, Justin Berry, and Alan Butler have their personal *modus operandi* and translate the *anti-game* behaviour in different ways. So, to better analyse the artworks here presented, it has been useful to make a parallelism between them and two significant artistic movements: Dada and International Situationism. Kent Sheely and Marque Cornblatt's practice present similarities with some aspects of the creative strategies implemented by Dada, while Justin Berry and Alan Butler display connections with the strategies conceived by Situationist Artists. In the following paragraphs, a selection of some of their most significant artworks will be analysed, comparing them with the similarities with these two artistic movements.

The Dada Gesture of Kent Sheely And Marque Cornblatt

Dada has been one of the most influential artistic movement of the XX century. It was the expression of the disgust for the brutalities of the WWI, a period in which artists felt the need to stand up against the politics of that time, the outdated social values, the mentality of the ruling class and the traditional culture in general. From 1916 to 1920, artists from Zurich, Cologne, Hannover, Paris and New York, among other cities, started to develop their own grammar of action to respond to what was happening to their society. They were not a unified movement, so they didn't have a unique artistic style or practice, but they had a common desire to subvert the current cultural, artistic and social state. They tried to implement subversive practices, in which chaos, oddity and nonsenses were the most suitable weapons. Their interventions moved from photomontage to games, from theatrical attacks to *readymades*. Action was one of the fundamental factors for Dada, which they translated into practices that aimed at decontextualise, provoke and sabotage the establishment. Even if composed of different artists with different approaches, Dada found its identity in the combination of *gesture* and *process*. According to Jean Arp, Dada wanted "to destroy the hoaxes of reason and to discover an unreasoned order" (Rubin, 1968, 12). They went through a reconfiguration of the existing artistic and cultural practice to subvert and replace them with their new syntax, a dada grammar of action. The machinima of Sheely and Cornblatt here examined do not just present a subversive gesture. They show, at the same time, the unified nature of the dada binomial of *gesture* and *process*: they deconstruct the gameplay operating within the restraints set by designers and introduce a breakdown, which prepares the ground for artistic intervention. The new grammar of action carried by these artists happens at the same time while hijacking the game: the moment of destruction and the one of creation here is simultaneous, and the observer has the opportunity to see the ludic mutation happening.

Kent Sheely, Ready For Action#1: Grand Theft Auto IV, 2012

In 2012, he started an ongoing series called *Ready For Action* in which the main character of different video games is "placed at the mercy of public transportation" (Sheely, 2016). In these machinima, he uses different types of video games, all characterised by a great deal of interactivity. The first one, *READY FOR ACTION #1: "Grand Theft Auto IV"*, was created inside the video game *GTA IV* (Rockstar Games, 2008). The character is disengaged from action, that is, he does not perform as expected by designers. On the contrary, he placidly waits for something to happen in subways or bus stations. This behaviour is entirely odd considering the freedom and the demand for action that a game like this asks the player.

In *GTA* there is no need to wait for the underground or the bus because the character can steal a car and drive with no respect for things and people: he can do whatever he wants without the fear of breaking the rules because in the game you are supposed to embrace this behaviour. However, in this machinima, the character is behaving in the opposite direction since he is stuck in front of the underground, waiting for it. The artist stops following the main narrative to deconstruct the game. He pauses the entire gameplay introducing an interference that freezes the character in a static position. The *anti-game* behaviour of Sheely creates a space for an endless wait that forced and hijacked the gameplay. Again, the deal with the game is broken and the artist took over it with irony. An essential aspect is the way in which Sheely decides to stop his character. He is carrying a weapon, a shotgun, that stands as a reminder of the possibility of nihilistic action. With that gun, Sheely's character could kill everyone in that underground and behave according to the standard, but the artist refuses. With this gesture, he cracks the gameplay and writes his personal grammar of action, re-designing the game space. The artist describes his intervention on the character of *GTA IV* as follows:

> *He is in no way bound by the constraints of a normal citizen; he doesn't have to wait for buses or trains or taxis, because he's afforded the freedom to just steal cars & mash the gas pedal until he gets where he wants to go, ostensibly without consequence. The game expects this of him [...]. I found a lot of joy in forcing him to take the long way round, living as an ordinary citizen [...]. I try to disconnect the characters as much as possible from the idea of combat and violence, and instead let the weapons represent agency and the ability to take action, which my character clearly does not employ* (Sheely, 2016).

Marque Cornblatt, Grand Theft Auto 4 Law Abider – A GTA Performance Art Project, 2008

In 2008 Marque Cornblatt created the machinima *Grand Theft Auto 4 Law Abider – A GTA Performance Art Project*, a three-hours performance realised inside the video game *GTA IV* (Rockstar Games, 2008). At first glance, *Grand Theft Auto 4 Law Abider* might seem a regular gameplay, however, after few minutes paying attention to the behaviour of the car, it is possible to see that something is wrong. The car does not engage in any crazy race, no one is running over the pedestrians trying to harm them and cars are not stolen. These are just a few actions typically performed in the world of *GTA*. In fact, as seen also in the previous artistic performances, it is highly unusual not to engage in some criminal activities in this type of video game. Instead, Cornblatt is trying to perform a behavior that belongs to the real world, in which respecting speed limits and traffic lights is mandatory. The artist wrecked the game forcing it to work in a way that is not meant to be followed. With this act of insubordination, the artist shows how to work with the constraints provided by the game itself and tries to break them remaining inside it. He does not change the surface, the visual aspect, instead he works on a deeper level. Cornblatt creates a new grammar of interaction getting rid of the standard imposed by designers. His personal ludic mutation operates generating a moment of oddity and uncertainty inside an environment that is built with specific codes. In describing his own work, the artist stated:

> *The goal of my artwork is to specifically "break" the player's and programmer's expectations of the game experience by intentionally behaving in a way that forces the game to do something it wasn't meant to do. In this artwork, by refusing to fight, kill or break any rules at all, I effectively subvert the original source material's meaning and change*

the game's context on a fundamental level. The game subsequently behaves in "broken" and unexpected ways, creating a new experience, one that was entirely unplanned by the game developers and is conceptually unique (Cornblatt, 2009).

The Situationist Approach of Justin Berry And Alan Butler

Even if International Situationist, developed in 1957, had precise objectives to accomplish, such as going beyond the division between art and daily life, or subverting the art business and the laws of capitalism, some of their practices can be traced even in the subversive methods of Justin Berry and Alan Butler. Thanks to p*sychogeography*, Situationists wanted to perform a practical and alternative exploration of urban environments that were seen as an imposition of the ruling class. Their objectives focused on a creative re-configuration of those spaces thanks to different practices such as *derives* and *détournement*. These actions aimed at deconstructing the urban space thanks to a swift passage across different locations, changing the way in which everyday objects are seen and taking them away from their usual environment. Talking about *derive*, Guy Debord describes it as the action of walking around aimlessly, looking at things as if it were the first time and paying attention to details (1958). This description fits perfectly with the kind of behaviour developed by Justin Berry in his series *Videogames Landscapes* (2012) and Alan Butler in *Down and Out in Los Santos* (2016). Both artists drop the game's tasks to focus their attention on what is usually designed to be ignored, going against what the gameplay demands them as players. In their practice, the moment of destruction and the one of creation is implied in their photographic production and each photo testifies the moment in which they took over the gameplay.

Justin Berry, Videogames Landscapes, 2012 – 2015

In 2012, Justin Berry started a series called *Videogames Landscapes*, focusing on video game environments using the language of photography. His photos are taken mostly from first-person-shooter games such as *Crysis* (Crytek, 2007-2013), *Call of Duty* (Activision Blizzard, 2003-2017) and *Medal of Honor* (EA, 1999-2012), or open world games like *Skyrim* (Bethesda Game Studios, 2011). Besides the astonishing level of realism reached by these landscapes, whose photorealism can be hard to recognise as digitally produced, the striking aspect of his practice lies in his decision to withdraw himself, as a player, from the gameplay and stop playing it in the way he is supposed to. He describes his modus operandi with these words:

> *I play the game just like anybody else, but where most people are playing by the rules, such as trying to kill the bad guys or rack up points, I am scanning the horizon for beautiful clouds, trying to find a place where the sun makes a silhouette of the mountaintops or where the ash and smoke from a nearby burning village will set off the russet tones of the scattered and stubby vegetation* (Berry, 2015).

Such poetic interpretation is significant since hides the *anti-game* nature of his behaviour. His photos do not tell a story and do not celebrate the game, instead, they act as moments of reflection released from the video game. His practice is reminiscent of Situationists' strategies in rethinking the meaning of urban landscapes. Each one of his photographs is an interruption of the normal flow of the gameplay and represents the moment in which the artist took over the game turning it into a space for artistic creation. Berry redefines the game environment by choosing not to act, shifting his attention to what usually is meant to go unseen. According to the

artist "There is power in finding places of quiet reflection in a world where you are supposed to be running around and killing people" (2014).

Alan Butler, Down And Out in Los Santos, 2016 – present

In 2016 Alan Butler started an ongoing project inside *GTA V* (Rockstar Games, 2013) titled *Down and Out in Los Santos*. The artist documented the homeless of Los Santos and the way in which they live inside the fictional city. He used the smartphone camera feature within the video game and wandered around the city assuming a photojournalistic approach, as he describes on the website dedicated to the project. *GTA* is a hyper-interactive video game that gives players the freedom to do whatever they want, with no limits or restrictions. They can drive like maniacs on the streets, run over pedestrians and harm them in many other different ways. Anyway, this is a programmed freedom because it is how the gameplay and its mechanics are developed. Players are allowed to do that because they are supposed to act in a certain way, as delinquents or criminals. However, even if this freedom might be appealing, Butler takes a step outside the gameplay and breaks the deal with it dropping the weapons and the criminal attitude of his character. He stands against the hegemony of the gameplay and, from the usual video game perspective, embarks on an odd journey. *GTA* series is also well known for the extreme realism presented by the environment and its inhabitants. Plenty of details make the player believe to be in a real world, and Alan Butler' photos testify the striking truthfulness of Los Santos and its people. But this is not the relevant aspect of his work. He withdraws from the standard behaviour to document the homeless of this fictional city, representing not just their faces and gestures, but also the tents they sleep in, the places where they live and the trash around them. Some of his photos describe piles and piles of garbage, but also empty plastic bottles and cans and he is giving importance to those things by choosing to take photos. With his project, the artist is giving a great deal of importance to people and things that do not play an essential role in the narrative of the video game. According to him, their only function is to be "a feature of the urban environment" (2016). The homeless of Los Santos enrich the environment and the player's experience, adding a great deal of credibility to the whole city, but represent an aspect that is meant to go unseen. Alan Butler states:

> *While the inhabitants of Los Santos possess only a superficial amount of artificial intelligence, it is possible to have real emotional experiences in their presence. This might sound sad and geeky, but it is true. The characters are aware of my presence as I photograph them, some ignore me, other times I am attacked and must defend myself. They chatter to each other, they share alcohol and cigarettes, they ask for money to buy drugs. Programmed to self-identify, they congregate with those in similar social situations to themselves* (Butler, 2016).

The artist assumes the role of the *flâneur*, the wonder of the city moved by the need to give voice to a piece of the fictional society of Los Santos that has no importance and no role within the video game. These characters are not even real, their role and behaviours are designed and programmed to be in a certain way. Anyway, Butler feels the need to establish a connection with them becoming a careful *connoisseur* and observer of the urban texture.

CONCLUSION

As previously stated, video games cast players in seemingly boundless environments, giving them the illusion to explore freely the space surrounding them. This freedom, however, is conferred by the game designer who has designed in advance the

gameplay, its structure and its rules. The player follows a structured path, adhering to a standard grammar of action. He accepts the games' rules and decides to play according to this deal in order to meet the its targets. This paper aimed at showing how artists have been able to break the game thanks to an *anti-game* practice, a subversive behaviour that redefines gameplay. It resonates with Galloway's concept of *counter-gaming* and Schleiner's idea of *ludic mutation* since they do not change the game's code or its visual appearance, and they do not search for glitches or bugs. They work with the limitations set by the game designer to find a way to wreck them, creating spaces for artistic intervention. Kent Sheely represents the ability of his character to take action and engage in the violent activities that he is supposed to be doing. His character is carrying a shotgun, ready to shoot everyone, but he can't: he is put at the mercy of public transport and withdraws him from gameplay, creating uncanny and ironic moments. Marque Cornblatt refuses to engage in criminal actions and forces his character to respect the traffic rules while driving a car. He breaks the game by acting in unexpected ways since in GTA the player embraces usually a violent attitude. Justin Berry is a *flâneur* of first-person-shooter games who creates fragments released from the game, in which action is erased. Then, Alan Butler takes a photojournalistic approach inside *GTA V* deciding to drop the criminal attitude and embarks on a journey to take photos of the homeless of Los Santos. Their *anti-game* practice operates under the surface. Apparently, they seem to follow the usual gameplay since they act within the possibilities designed by the game designer and embedded in the game's code, but at the same time they are exploiting these features to perform a shift inside the game system. Their attitude is both destructive and creative: the so-called *pars destruens* aims at hijacking gameplay's grammar as it prepares the ground for the *pars costruens*, the moment of artistic creation highlighting their *anti-game* practice. They do not perform ludic interventions, they do not celebrate the game or develop different ways to play the game, rather they work within the limitations to wreck them, creating spaces for artistic intervention. This ludic mutation testifies the artist's power to take over gameplay and break the deal with the game by implementing interventions that allow unexpected behaviors. The analogies with artistic movements like Dada and the International Situationist provides insights into a kind of subversive process that aims at creating a new syntax and a new grammar of action by deliberately exploiting the exact same rules that govern the given system. The artist is a *griefer*, a heckler, turning games into blank canvases, raw material to play and re-play with.

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