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PERSUASIVE MEANINGFUL PLAY

Exploring the video game *Behind Every Great One*

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Abstract

This thesis shines a light on tools that can be used in order to create persuasive and meaningful video games. This research was designed as an exploration of the game *Behind Every Great One*, with the purpose to determine if and how the game could attain a persuasive and meaningful representation of a benevolent sexist situation.

To achieve this, the research took on three different approaches: an interview with the developer, a textual analysis of the game, and a qualitative survey analysing players' reactions to, and perceptions of, the game.

The findings suggest that displaying characters' emotions in ways that transmit them to the players, paired with a realistic, complex representation of the social situation portrayed, are imperative for making the game have a persuasive and meaningful impact on the players. The researcher also suggests the term *persuasive meaningful play* as an applicable way to refer to games that contain similar characteristics as *Behind Every Great One*.

Keywords: Benevolent Sexism, Persuasive Games, Meaningful Play, Game Design

Table of Contents

1	Introduction	1
2	Background	3
2.1	Impact of Media	3
2.1.1	Theoretical Models	3
2.1.2	Impact of Video Games	4
2.2	Persuasive Games and Meaningful Play	5
2.2.1	Game fundamentals	5
2.2.2	Persuasive Games	6
2.2.3	Meaningful Play	7
2.3	Benevolent Sexism.....	8
3	Problem and method	11
3.1	Method	11
3.1.1	Game selection process	12
3.1.2	Game Analysis	13
3.1.3	Survey	14
3.1.4	Pilot Test of survey	16
3.1.5	Interview	17
3.2	Ethical considerations	17
4	Results	19
4.1	Textual Analysis	19
4.2	Thematic Analysis of Survey	22
4.2.1	Mechanics	23
4.2.2	Visual and musical aesthetics	25
4.2.3	Narrative	25
4.3	Interview with developer.....	27
4.4	Preliminary results	28
5	Conclusions	30
5.1	Summary	30
5.2	Discussion	30
5.3	Future Work.....	33
	References	34

1 Introduction

Video games in the western part of the world have been, for many years, a field dominated by male developers. In 2015 only 22% of developers in the video games industry were female (Weststar, Legault, Gosse, & O'Meara, 2016). This could be one of the reasons why leading male characters traditionally dominate video games. Even now that there is an increase in female protagonists, we still often see women in the role of sexualized, supporting characters (Lych, Tompkins, Driel & Fritz, 2016). Oversexualized female characters are still common, and they are more frequently shown with clothing inappropriate for the task they are performing and left partially nude (Downs & Smith, 2010). Furthermore, it is also very common to find female characters dismissed to play the role of the damsel in distress, which is a clear example of the benevolent sexism portrayed in video games (Sarkeesian, 2013).

Video games are now being used for a range of different purposes besides entertainment, from being used as educational tools, to raise awareness about social situations in or society. Some games teach programming, for example, while *True: learn()* developed by Luden.io (2019), and games that talk about life from a refugee's point of view like *Against All Odds* developed by the United Nations High Commission on Refugees (2016). Movements like Games For Change (2004) were created in order to promote, help create and distribute games for social change. Such games are aimed to have a positive impact on players, promoting equality and empathy. However, there are only a few games that address violence against women or sexist behavior. The reason for this is not that the medium is unfit to do so. On the contrary, it may be effective in doing so:

Games challenge the accepted norms and the ordinary beliefs, to question and enquire them, providing a compelling arena in which players can problematise and reflect on their beliefs, bias, frames and so on.

(Mariani, 2016 p. 159)

By looking at how social conducts can be learned by observing other social situations, this research will present three theoretical models that aspire to explore how significant the impact of media, such as video games, can be on society. Video games are not only capable of using fictional characters and situations to represent real-life situations, but also to exemplify how social systems work. Procedural rhetoric is a term created by Bogost (2007) to describe how video games, through their ability to create interactions and rule-based representations, could achieve loyal portrayals of how real life works capable of containing unique persuasive and meaningful power.

This research explored the game *Behind Every Great One* by Decostructeam (2018), looking for if and how this game was capable of portraying the harmfulness of benevolent sexist behaviour. It also explored how efficient the design of the game was to communicate its meaning. This was done in order to provide some tools for developers that wish to create a game with a similar purpose.

The research was conducted using three different approaches for obtaining data in order to explore *Behind Every Great One*. These approaches were: textual analysis of the game, a survey that collects players' experiences regarding the game, and an interview with the developers. Although this method focuses on the specific case of this game, the goal with this research has been to arrive at insights that can reliably serve as a basis for further research on related topics, and even though the starting point of this research targets benevolent sexist situations, researchers or developers can apply the resulting insights in other social harmful situations.

2 Background

Through the serious game genre, video games have become a new tool for teaching, persuade and inform. However, not only the games specifically designed for these purposes are able to influence on human social behaviours. Every game, including those created for entertainment purposes, has the potential to influence society, like all media content we consume. This background will introduce several theoretical models designed with the purpose of studying how influential media can be on society. It will also introduce game related concepts as persuasive games and meaningful play. Both concepts are related to how games can be influential on human thoughts, attitudes and behaviour. How can they, using correct procedural rhetoric, persuade the player and offer a meaningful experience? Finally, this chapter will introduce the concept of benevolent sexism, which is the type of harmful situation that this study will focus on.

2.1 Impact of Media

2.1.1 Theoretical Models

There are several theoretical models that can be used to study how people learn social behaviors. It is difficult to measure how substantial the influence of media is over our social interactions and perception of each other. According to Stermer and Burkley (2015), three principal theoretical models that can be applied when studying the impact of traditional media: *Cultivation Theory*, *Objectification Theory* and *Social-cognitive Theory*. These theories have been used for explaining how sexism in traditional media can perpetuate sexist responses and how it can extend to new forms of media, such as video games. First, the Cultivation Theory shows that people who are exposed to sexist media will slowly adopt these sexist beliefs as their own. For example, the evidence presented by Giaccardi, Ward, Seabrook, Manago and Lippman (2016) suggests that watching sports weekly is predictive of more endorsement of traditional male roles. Consequently, there are reasons to believe that frequent play of violent and sexualized video games could also have an impact on attitudes towards male and female roles. The Objectification Theory shows that representing women in a way that emphasizes sexual attributes and submissive characteristics reinforces masculine stereotypes and feminine notions of inferiority on consumers. A study conducted by Galdi, Maass and Cadinu (2014) showed that objectifying TV content may encourage more forms of harassment towards women and also could make men perceive women as less competent. Lastly, the Social-Cognitive Theory states that we often acquire knowledge by observing others being rewarded or punished for certain behaviors and imitate their actions or adopt their opinions.

These three theories helped researchers to show how media has a considerable impact on the consumers. These theories can be applied to new kinds of media, such as video games and social media. For example, LaRose and Eastin(2004) used the Social-Cognitive Theory as a framework to study the relationship between gratification and social media. Possibly, it can be applied in the case of video games as well.

2.1.2 Impact of Video Games

A big difference between video games and other kinds of media is the level of agency it provides. For Ermi and Mäyrä (2005), to be immersed means to become virtually or physically a part of the experience itself. The players are more than simple spectators; they act as performers as they get involved and included in the game through playing (Mariani, 2016). When players identify themselves with the character they are playing, they can experience an alteration to the self-perception and start to share the character's feelings and goals (Klimmt, Hefner & Vorderer, 2009). When these alterations occur, the player can be adopting the characters' point of view, for example, masculine beliefs portrayed by the character. Similarly, a study conducted by Gabbiadini, Riva, Andrighetto, Volpato and Bushman (2016) shows that when the player identifies with the main character in a game with high sexist violence content like *Grand Theft Auto* (2013), they end up having reduced empathy for female victims. One of the factors used to predict violence against women is the lack of empathy towards them (Sanday, 1981 in Gabbiandini et al., 2012). Stermer and Burkley (2012) conducted a study exploring a connection between sexist video games and sexist behavior towards women. They found evidence that indicates that men who play video games with highly sexist content more frequently held benevolent sexist beliefs in comparison to the men who play non-sexist video games. Researchers have been investigating the influence that video games might have on players for decades, but without reaching any consistent answer. For example, according to Stermer and Burkley (2012), it is possible that men who play sexist video games do so because they already have benevolent sexist beliefs, and thus, the games would not cause these beliefs. However, researchers have not only focused on studying the sexist and violent influences of video games. There is an emerging field of study that explores the possible impact of media for triggering positive social change. For example, projects such as *iThrive Games Foundation*¹ work with teenagers to promote and enhance empathy, forgiveness, kindness, and other social and emotional skills using games. They offer not only academic information but also practical

¹ <https://www.ithrivegames.org/>

tools for developers wanting to design these kinds of games. Other researchers like Gentile et al. (2009) study the relationship between prosocial behaviors and playing prosocial video games, showing in one of their studies that playing games with prosocial content cause people to be more cooperative and helpful in a short time basis. The researchers speculate that a long term effect from playing prosocial video games could include three aspects: “(1) precognitive and cognitive constructs, such as perception and expectation schemata, beliefs, and scripts; (2) cognitive-emotional constructs, such as attitudes and stereotypes; and (3) affective traits, such as conditioned emotional responses (e.g., equating playing violent games with fun) and affective traits like empathy or trait hostility.” (p. 754) They also point out the importance of repeating exposure to prosocial video games and selective reinforcement (given by feedback systems in the games) for these effects to develop.

Since the influence of media on society is so substantial, challenging prevalent beliefs and attitudes through media content could potentially be impactful. It is possible to imagine that video games challenging certain stereotypes or beliefs about women and their situations could have a similar effect.

2.2 Persuasive Games and Meaningful Play

2.2.1 Game fundamentals

This section is dedicated to describe basic game related concepts relevant for this research, and various elements that can be considered to constitute the fundamentals of a game.

For Salen and Zimmerman (2004), playing a game is interacting with and within a representational universe; a space of possibility with narrative dimensions from where meaning can emerge. Games contain various elements through which they may enable such meaning. Different authors have similar or equal definitions and notions of these elements. For example, Schell (2015) states that four basic elements compose games. These are: mechanics, story, aesthetics and technology. In this tetrad system, mechanics refers to the procedures, rules and goals of a game, story to the sequence of events that occurs in the game, technology to any materials and interactions that make a game possible, and aesthetics to how a game looks, sounds, smells, tastes, and feels. Through these elements, games might thus attain meaning (Järvinen 2008; Salen & Zimmerman 2004).

In comparison to Schell’s definition (2008), the MDA framework (Hunicke, LeBlank & Zubec, 2004), which stands for *mechanics*, *dynamics* and *aesthetics*, uses a different definition of aesthetics. In this framework, aesthetics refers to the emotional responses that the game could evoke in the player. Dynamics, which gives rise to the aesthetics, describes

the behavior of the mechanics as a result of player inputs, and finally, the mechanics are the rules and available interactions.

Ralph and Monu (2015) propose a theory with the purpose to reconcile the two frameworks previously described into one clear and unified theory on which elements constitute games. This unified theory suggests eight elements grouped in four categories: game mechanics and narrative mechanics; technology and dynamics; aesthetics; embedded, emergent and interpreted narratives. In this case, aesthetics is defined as “the emotions evoked by a game” (2015, p. 13). The game mechanics are elements that create and manipulate challenges for the player, and the narrative mechanics advance the plot of the game. Technology is the medium that delivers the mechanics, and dynamics is the emergent behavior of both the game and the player during the game. Finally, there are three types of narratives, in which case the word narrative refers to “an account of a series of events, facts, etc., given in order and with the establishing of connections between them” (2015 pp. 14). The difference between the narratives is determined by who delivers it. If the developers deliver the narrative, it is called “embedded narrative”, but if it is delivered at least in part by players, it is called “emergent narrative”. Lastly, “interpreted narrative” is used to denote what player and observer recollect and interpret from both the abovementioned narratives.

Researchers and developers have adapted these different frameworks to respond to their own needs. For the propose of this research, Schell’s (2015) definitions of mechanics and aesthetics, and Ralph and Monu’s (2015) definition of narratives are the ones referred to when discussing different aspects of a game.

2.2.2 Persuasive Games

The term “persuasive games” first appears in the book *Persuasive Games* written by Ian Bogost (2007) and it refers to video games that use procedural rhetoric effectively. Procedural rhetoric is another concept created by Bogost in order to explain how video games through their ability to create interactions and rule-based representations of the world have a unique persuasive power. Bogost builds the term from two existing concepts: procedural and rhetoric. The term procedural refers to a systematic series of actions directed to a specific end. Bogost explains that not only in computational structures but also in non-computational ones, like for example the Law, we encounter established rules of execution. The second word in the term is rhetoric. It first appears in *Gorgias* by Plato written around 380 BC. and refers to the art of persuasion using oratory. Through the years, the concept of rhetoric has expanded and now it refers just to persuasion: the ability to change someone else's beliefs. This persuasion could occur through painting, writing, performative arts, sculpture, and other expressive media like video games. Procedural rhetoric would then be

the art of using computational process in a persuasive way (Bogost, 2007). Bogost considers narrative and mechanics tools for achieving procedural rhetoric, as both can emulate real life processes made responsive to the player's choices. An example used by Bogost of a video game that uses real-life process in a persuasive way is *Animal Crossing* (2001). In his final argument describing *Animal Crossing*, he states that the game "can be seen as a critique of contemporary consumer culture that attempts to persuade the player to understand both the intoxication of material acquisition and the subtle pleasures of abstention" (2007, p. 275). Bogost describes games as tools with disrupting social potential that could lead to significant long-term social change.

Even though the term persuasive game is relatively new, the idea of creating games that attempt to persuade players is not. For example, *The Landlord's Game* created by Elizabeth J Maggie in 1904 is an anti-capitalist board game created to generate awareness about the unfairness of the rental system, where rents enrich property owners and impoverish tenants. The game made a critic of the economic structure, creating a safe space for children to experience the landlord's system. (Mariani, 2016)

The term persuasive games has been broadly accepted by academia to describe games that let players gain understanding of real-world issues. For example, Jacobs, Jansz and Kneer (2019) use the term in a study where they analyze two games about teen dating violence, measuring if they have effects on teens' attitudes towards abusive relationships. Svahn (2014) studies how pervasive persuasive games cloud influence knowledge, attitudes, and consumer behaviour in regards to electricity consumption. It has also been involved in the study of advertisement games, commonly known as "advergames" (Roettl, Waiguny & Terlutter, 2016). It has been used even in the creation of other related terms, as "critical play" by Flanagan (2009).

2.2.3 Meaningful Play

For the purpose of this study, the concept of meaningful play is used in two ways, both of them connected to, and in some ways encompassed by, Bogost (2007) definitions of persuasive games. The first definition of meaningful play comes from Katie Salen and Eric Zimmerman (2004). It emerges from the relationship between the system of the game and actions from the players, and how the system responds to the players' actions. It appears when players' decisions and actions have not only immediate significance but also an effect at a later moment of the game experience. For example, the game *The Walking Dead* (2015) offers moments in the story where you have to make certain decisions, like help another character. Later in the game story, the character that the player chooses to help will

remember this decision and help the player back. In order to be meaningful play the results of the game action have to be communicated to the player in a perceivable way in the game. Also, the player should be able to extract meaning from the connection between game actions and game results. To play a game is to take part in a complex interplay of meaning (Salen & Zimmerman, 2004, p. 452).

For the second meaning, the researcher considered the persuasive aspects of games. In this case, meaningful play is when games achieve to transcend the moment of play and have an effect in players' life in some way. The idea comes from interpreting a game as a rite of passage, where a part of the players is transformed after finishing the experience (Mariani, 2016). The in-game choices create transformative reflection not only while playing but also after the game has ended.

When player's choices and actions have an impact on a context that is wider than the game itself, leaving the magic circle to create value and potentially affect the real life, we are in the midst of another kind of meaningful play. This meaningful play occurs when a game does not simply ask the player to take in-game action and make in-game choices, but when it involves players in an experience capable of generating a real out-game heritage in terms of values, memory and feelings; in terms of experiences that invite players to reflect and potentially change.

(Mariani 2016 pp.243)

2.3 Benevolent Sexism

Benevolent Sexism is a term that comes from the *Ambivalent Sexism Theory*, a theory that describes sexism as a social construction consisting of multiple dimensions. These dimensions can be divided into two categories: hostile and benevolent sexism (Glick & Fiske, 1996). This theory emerged out of the need to include behaviors that were not being perceived as sexism because they did not rely on hostility but were nonetheless harmful to women. It works as a complementary ideological belief system where these categories reflect a structure of rewards on one hand (in the case of benevolent sexism) and punishment on the other (hostile sexism) (Glick & Fiske, 2001).

In order to help differentiate benevolent sexism from hostile sexism, Glick and Fiske (1996) created *The Ambivalent Sexism Inventory*. Glick and Fiske (1996) created the inventory as a research tool to be incorporated in research when measurement and categorizing of sexist behaviors are needed. The inventory has three subsections under the benevolent sexism item: *protective paternalism* (“every woman should have a man to whom she can turn for help in times of trouble”), *complementary gender differentiation* (“many women have a quality of purity that few men possess”), and *heterosexual intimacy* (“people are not truly happy in life unless they are romantically involved with a member of the other sex”) (Glick & Fiske 1996 p. 7).

Benevolent sexism is described by Stermer and Burkley (2015) as a misleading positive behavior associated with rigid gender roles where the male has a patronizing and protective attitude toward women, but such beliefs relegate a woman to an inferior social status. Even though this behavior can contain subjectively positive attitudes without bad intentions from the perpetrators, they might not be experienced as positive by the women who receive them. These attitudes restrict them to domestic, caretaking roles and position them as the weaker sex. In video games, the Damsel in Distress trope is a recurrent female plot story that could be identified as a display of benevolent sexism (Sarkeesian, 2013). This trope is representative for always showing female characters in powerless positions, as the weaker sex whose rescue is a goal for male protagonists. A classic example of this is *The Legend of Zelda* (1998) game franchise where a female character is kidnapped in order to be saved by a protagonist male character. These stories reinforce the idea that women need male characters to save them from the trouble they are in. The characteristics of the Damsel in Distress characters carry out several of the Protective Paternalist items in the Benevolent Sexism scale developed by Glick and Fiske (1996). For example, that women should be cherished and protected by men who always have to sacrifice themselves in order to do so.

This kind of disguised sexism has many effects on women. For starters, it could lead to women accepting sexist restrictions. As has been proven in a study conducted by Moya, Glick, Exposito, De Lemus and Hart (2007) benevolent sexist justifications are disguised as chivalry, and therefore women accept more sexist restrictions thinking that they are being taken care of. Benevolent Sexism also entails patronizing behavior; exposure to this can result in an undermining of the woman’s cognitive performance and cause self-doubt (Dardenne, Dumont & Bollier, 2007). Another fundamental fact about Benevolent Sexism is that it typically is not perceived as harmful. For example, in a study conducted by Barreto and Ellemers (2005), the data suggested that benevolent sexism was considered less offensive than hostile sexism:

Our mediational analyses clearly showed that benevolent sexism is not recognized as sexist because its source is relatively positively evaluated and therefore deviates from the prototype of a sexist perpetrator

(Barreto and Ellemers, 2005 p. 7)

Even though benevolent sexism might be seen as less harmful than hostile sexism, it has been found that the attitudes it encompasses are associated with beliefs that excuse sexual harassment (Pryor, Giedd & Williams, 1995).

3 Problem and method

Though there is an increasing field of research exploring the benefits of using video games as tools to foster empathy, teach and sensitize society through persuasive games and meaningful play, a lot of the research does not approach certain issues in-depth. For example, none of the three example games used by Belman and Flanagan in the paper *Designing Games to Foster Empathy* (2010) exemplifies a sexist harmful situation directed at women. There is a lack of studies targeting games that want to achieve a meaningful impact on women's rights issues. Also, there are only a few games with these intentions to research about.

Part of the reason why benevolent sexism is so harmful is because it is highly accepted and less perceived as sexism. It contains attitudes less likely to be seen as sexism and often labeled as chivalry and even flattering (Barreto & Ellemers, 2005). Creating awareness of these harmful social situations, therefore, becomes a very important step in addressing them as Barreto and Ellemers state; it has to be perceived before it can be challenged.

This study aims to contribute to the lack of research on this specific topic and also to help encourage the development of games portraying socially harmful situations in a persuasive and meaningful way. This research explores the game *Behind Every Great One* (2018) while focusing on how video games can create awareness and understanding for social harmful situations like benevolent sexism. In this research, this focus constituted the lens for the researcher to analyze the data gathered, and helped to define characteristics that could be generalized for the creation of new games. This research also proposes *persuasive meaningful play* as an apt and exact term when studying these kinds of games.

In this chapter, the method used for exploring the case study will be described. The pilot conducted as a part of this study will also be presented.

3.1 Method

This study was designed to be an exploration of the game *Behind Every Great One* by Deconstructeam (2018). It was designed as an inductive explorative research in order to develop generalizations from observations (Given, 2008). As a way of achieving a deep understanding of the game, this research used three different approaches for obtaining and analyzing data: a game analysis, a survey and an expert interview. The first approach, the game analysis, used *Textual Analysis* as Diane Carr (2017) describes it. The second approach is a study conducted through a survey consisting of both qualitative, open-ended questions

and follow-up questions. The questions revolved around the game's content and how it is perceived and understood by the players. The data gathered through this survey was then analyzed through *thematic analysis* (Braun & Clarke 2006) for the purpose of discerning how the game manages to communicate its meaning and what effects it has on the experience of the player. The final approach consists of an interview with the developers of the game in question for the purpose of gaining insight into the thoughts and intentions that shaped the game. This is later compared with the findings from the analyses in order to understand the impact of the game's design on the players. The comparison is also aimed to gain insight into how and whether the developers manage to attain meaningful representation of real-life situations.

In the conclusion of this study, the researcher discusses possibilities of designing games for generating awareness and understanding of social harmful situations. The discussion proceeds from the indications of the findings arrived at through this case study.

3.1.1 Game selection process

This research started with the idea of studying games that made critiques or made players reflect upon benevolent sexist situations. The researcher conducted the search for those games through several platforms for video game distributions: Steam (2003), Games for Change (2004) and Itch.io (2013). These distribution channels primarily contain games made by independent developers and were selected for that reason. Independent studios tend to have more artistic freedom which allows their games to reflect their own expression at a deep level, and target more serious matters (Guevara-Villalobos, 2011). In the case of the website Games for Change, they have a curatorship of their game library recollecting games that has been developed for the purpose of achieving social change.

The main focus of this search was to find games that illustrate benevolent sexist situations where the main playable character (Victorine) was the victim. Playing as the victim could make the players take a different perspective on a situation that they may not have experienced before. The words used as keywords for the search were: "sexism", "woman" or "harmful". The search procedure consisted of two steps. The first step was reading the description of the games that appeared in the search. If the game description hinted any characteristics of benevolent sexist situations they would be played. In the second step, the games were played and compared with the Benevolent Sexism scale developed by Glick and Fiske (2012). The game *Behind Every Great One* was determined to fit with various items of the scale. For example, the main character is stereotyped to have the role of caretaker and is idealized by the husband who restrains her with the excuse of taking care of her. The study

became an exploration of the game *Behind Every Great One* as it showed to be an interesting case and was the only game that in a very accurate way reproduced a housewife submitted to a benevolent sexist situation and the only one that was checking items in the scale that also fulfill the criteria of playing as the victim.

3.1.2 Game Analysis

In order to analyse the game, textual analysis was selected as a method. There are several ways to approach textual analysis, sometimes very different from each other. One example is the approach described by Diane Carr in the article *Methodology, Representation and Games* (2017). Textual analysis is an analysis generated through play. It is an exploratory approach that examines how meaning emerges during play, which is then conceptualized and characterized through fragmentation. When Krzywinska (2015) explains the advantages of performing textual analysis on video games, she emphasizes how it embraces the story, codes, rules and mechanics that are intrinsic to the creation of games. For the purpose of this study, Carr's approach was used.

To perform textual analysis, the researcher has to treat the game she wants to analyse as a text, but doing so without denying that it also involves attributes as play, chance or interactivity (Buckingham 2006). Carr (2017 p.7) explains that this occurs just by the simple reason that "the game is a text because I am doing textual analysis".

Carr (2017) describes her textual analysis approach as consisting of three steps: play, fragmentation and "reading off". The researcher starts by playing the game several times. After playing the game, it is fragmented by dividing and describing its content in segments. This fragmentation allows for a more thorough analysis as you treat aspects and sections of the game in comprehensible divisions. The last step is to consider the fragments through three lenses: structural, textual, and intertextual. The structural lens involves "organization of the game's constituting units and the ways in which these units interrelate in time and space" (Carr, 2009, p. 3). The textual lens focuses on the connotations that emerge during play. Finally, the intertextual lens refers to an unavoidable aspect: the researcher will give her readings of the game through her context, subjectivity and experiences. In this study, the approach used when applying these lenses was to identify persuasive meaningful play portraying benevolent sexism. Thus, the search for meaning through textual analysis always remained related to how the game managed to portray this.

The method of textual analysis was selected based on Carr's description of it as having the potential to generate unexpected findings, which she exemplifies by showing her results from analysing the game *Resident Evil 4* (Capcom, 2005), in which she discovers new

meanings of what a zombie can represent. In the analysis of *Behind Every Great One*, the researcher paid special attention to how its structure contained good use of procedural rhetoric, and how meaningful representations emerged through the use of symbols.

3.1.3 Survey

The survey used in this research consisted of an online questionnaire and play session of *Behind Every Great One* with the possibility of follow-up questions. This was selected as an approach since the study was designed to obtain in-depth information about players' experiences in relation to the game. The method recommended by Cote and Raz (2015) to better achieve this is one-to-one interviews, which was also the initial approach considered for this research. This method allows the researcher to obtain more personal input from a smaller group. As Cote and Raz (2015) comment, one-to-one interviews allow for a more intimate space between the subject and researcher where they can feel more comfortable to share personal observations from the topic or research. It is also a space where the researcher has more control over the direction of the conversation. However, due to limitations in regards to gathering participants the study mutated from one-to-one semi-structured interviews to online questionnaire. The method of using an online questionnaire does not come with any extensive challenges in regards to gathering participants, and still can produce in-depth information and a safe space between participant and researcher.

The final survey design consisted of three parts. The first part was having the participants play the game. The second part was a questionnaire consisting of open-ended questions regarding the participants' experiences and perception of the game. The third part was follow-up questions, communicated to the participants through their preferable channel of communication. This last step was however, not applied for all subjects. In the first part, the subject was asked to play *Behind Every Great One* as long as they felt like. Their thoughts and experiences resulting from their play session were to serve as a basis for answering the questionnaire in the second part of the study.

The questionnaire consisted of nineteen questions divided into seven sections. There were also six additional questions at the start of the experiment, before playing the game, concerning personal data, consent and contact for follow-up questions. The questions were very open and focused on describing aspects of the game, characters and the relationship between the characters. These questions were inspired by thoughts and feelings triggered in the researcher from playing the game. The researcher then presented the questions to the participants that played the game in order to discern which perceptions were unique and which could be seen to recur in other individuals. Through the questions, the participants were given the possibility to discuss aspects regarding narrative and mechanics freely. Four

of the sections were dedicated to the characters and their relationships. Every section started with a question that let the participants describe some aspect of the game's narrative, either a character or a relationship between characters. This was followed up by a question that lets the participants explain what it was that made them perceive this aspect in the way they described it. Finally, the participants were asked to describe a moment from the game that exemplifies their perspective. This last question will help to establish if there are some more memorable moments or game mechanics concerning the development of the relationships in the game.

The next section concerned the duration and number of times that the game was played and, in case the game was replayed, why did they do so. The researcher considered these two factors as indicators of engagement to the game, and they would be part of the criteria for choosing subjects for follow-up questions, asking why helped to understand how they played the game, for example, if they were looking for alternative endings.

The final section concerns the perception of the game in relation to the real world. As this game tries to simulate real life, the purpose of these questions is to determine how accurate this situation appeared in the eyes of the participants.

The third step in this study was the follow-up questions. The criteria for choosing subjects for the follow-up questions were based on the responses from the players. These criteria were the following: the participants showed interest in the game in their responses; those responses show significant reflection; they played at least 15 minutes or replayed the game. If they qualified through the criteria, the follow-up questions were asked a week after the play-session. The amount of time before for the follow-up interview allowed the player to have space for personal reflections about the game after the play session. There was a special interest in knowing whether the participants talked to anyone else about their experience of the game, if the game had a reflexive impact on the players' personal experiences and if they created a relationship between them and the main character. It was also crucial for the research to know what parts the subject remember from the game, as Bandura (2001) explains in his study about Social Cognitive Theory of Mass Communication, people cannot be influenced by observed events if they do not remember them.

For analyzing the data, the researcher conducted thematic analysis in line with the guidelines set by Braun and Clarke (2006). This method is used to analyze and identify themes in the data set. These themes were identified patterns that emerged from the data and capture something of importance in relation to the research's goal. In the case of this

study that meant discerning which aspect of the game affected the players, to what extent and in what way. This exploration was relevant to the research question as it highlighted how the game might achieve meaningful representation of this situation.

The selected quotes presented in the results section are retrieved from the subjects' responses from the survey and reproduced verbatim. However, some of the responses were written in Spanish and have therefore been translated by the author/me as truthfully as possible.

3.1.4 Pilot Test of survey

The pilot test for the survey was held with three participants for the purpose of identifying necessary adjustments for the method of data collection. The pilot was conducted a few days before the final survey was released.

As the study was initially planned to be one-to-one interviews, two subjects were asked to come to a lab for participation. Because both subjects withdrew from participating completely before the interviews, and there were difficulties finding new volunteers, the experiment was replaced with an online survey. A benefit of this change in method was that potential bias caused due to politeness or social norms that might occur in a one-to-one conversation could be avoided. The researcher then sent the survey to three new subjects from the researcher's personal contacts. It contained a link to the game followed by the questionnaire. The questions for the questionnaire were created by transforming the guidelines for the one-to-one interview into this new online survey.

None of the subjects encountered any difficulties in playing the game or filling the questionnaire. Two of the three subjects perceived the main character as someone having a rough time in her life and attributed this to her home and family situation. On the other hand, the third subject described the woman as a happy person in a loving environment. This perception raised suspicion of how long the subject played the game, as the character cries several times throughout the game, as a display of unhappiness. The researcher then added a question regarding the time played was added to the questionnaire, to ensure that the perception of the character to be in a happy and loving environment was possible even after seeing the character display her emotions.

After discussing the game and the depth of the questions for feedback purposes with one of the participants, it was evident that a second stage of interview, a more personal one, was needed in order to give participants space to share any extra thoughts or opinions on the game. The follow-up interview also made it possible to gain more information about the

relationship developed between the player and the main character, for example, if the player strived to keep the main character from crying, or tried to make her happy. Another interesting data that emerged from the follow-up interview was that the participant thought about the game after finishing his participation. The game had affected his mood and made him go from calm to preoccupied for a whole day by making him think about people in that situation. As this experiment searches for persuasiveness and meaningfulness, the fact that the game had an impact on an entire day in the subject is promising.

The data obtained from the pilot was deemed to have sufficient depth to explain the perception and experiential effect of the game, so its method of data collection was kept in the survey that was used for the purpose of the study's main data collection. That survey was uploaded and shared through the researcher's personal Facebook account and re-posted by other contacts. The questionnaire quickly gained more responses this way, showing that snowballing sampling was a more suitable method to find participants. In conclusion, the modified survey with the follow-up interview, as well as the method of finding participants, was deemed to be a suitable method for obtaining sufficient data for this part of the thesis.

3.1.5 Interview

The interview with the developers of the game was designed as a one-to-one semi-structured interview using e-mail in order to let the developers discuss and rethink their answers. The researcher designed the interview according to the recommendations of Cote and Raz (2015) for obtaining in-depth information for qualitative research. After starting communications with the team over their Facebook page, the researcher was referred to speak directly to the game writer who was also the game designer. The interview was conducted before playing the game several times over several e-mails. The main focus of the interview was the process of creation, the intentions behind it and the reactions they were expecting players to have in response to the game.

3.2 Ethical considerations

The illustration of a harmful sexist situation in the game used in this research could potentially be a sensitive subject to some participants. Therefore, several aspects of the circumstances of participation were taken into consideration, and assessed in accordance to their ethical viability. First of all, the study method that was finally used allowed the participants to play the game in a setting of their own choice, as opposed to placing them in an exposed or unfamiliar setting. This would allow them to choose a setting where they could feel safe to react in accordance to their experience of the game. Secondly, the participants were all volunteers and they had the right to answer the questions they felt like, simply not

send their answers or stop playing the game at any point they desired. All the volunteers also signed a digital consent form in accordance to proper research practice from the Swedish Research Council (2017). The consent form had enough information without endangering the data by predisposing the volunteers to obtain any specific answers. There were no attempts to contact the participants that did not agree to be contacted for follow-up questions.

After the follow-up questions, all the names or personal information were erased from the data collection. The data was published anonymously, protecting the identity of the participants, offering a safe space for their answers.

As the game was released as a free product online, there were no infringements on the rights of distribution when using it for this study. The researcher also declares no personal or professional affiliation to the developers of the game. Thus, the researcher does not in any way aim to promote the game, but simply uses it on the basis of its suitability for the goal of the research.

4 Results

4.1 Textual Analysis

For the purpose of the analysis of *Behind Every Great One* the entire game was fragmented. Each of the defined fragments then received the same analytical considerations. Following the fragmentation system from textual analysis, the game was first fragmented into sections of days (day 1, day 2, etc.), which was then further fragmented again into 3 moments (housework, dinnertime and bedtime). After the second fragmentation, elements were “unpacked”, as Carr (2017 p.5) describes it, with the three lenses commented on in the methodology chapter (structural, textual, and intertextual). In the analysis, there was a focus on elements that had attributes that provide consequences, connotations, social codes and emotional triggers, as those were deemed thematically related to, and thus effectively representational of, socially harmful situations.

The resulting analysis from this process will be presented in this section. It will start with a summary of the game to give some context to the reader. The analysis is going to be shown in a very descriptive way for the reader to have a clear image of the game, and thus a better understanding when reading the remaining chapters throughout this thesis.

Behind Every Great One is a short point and click game that illustrates a series of days in a house where you play as the housewife, Victorine. The game environment resembles a conventional middle to upper-class house. Every day you wake up and you are given a few options of actions to do while you walk through the house. These options consist of chores (washing dishes, cook, water the plants, cleaning the toilet, iron clothes and sweep) or recreational activities (smoke a cigarette, read, use the computer or just sit in the living room). At the end of this series of actions, there is a cinematic of a dinner event. Depending on the moment in the story, there are either just the main couple or more family members present here. The conversation at dinner will always include comments on the house chores that you might have not completed during the day, and soon the player will notice that there are not enough interactions available in the day to do all the chores. As the game goes, you lose the possibility of doing some of the recreational activities. This is a game where you navigate through the days with not much power of deciding the fate of the main character. Instead you are bound to repeat the same tasks day by day, which create a feeling for how monotone the life of the main character is. In the role of the main character, you are left with a feeling of entrapment in a continual and static process without apparent meaning. The last part of each day is a cinematic bedtime event, with just the couple where the husband will ask Victorine for sex and give you the choice of accepting or denying it.

The game transmits the stress and anxiety that the main character is feeling by changing the color palette, zooming in and shaking the camera, triggered by and indicating the main character's need for crying. The zoom feedback acts as punishment or reward system showing what behaviors have good or bad repercussions for the main character. This zoom-feedback shows you that the chores and the complaint or critical comments are the ones creating anxiety for the character and gives the player a claustrophobic feeling (as the viewport gets narrower). Crying and recreational interactions would be a moment of relief where the camera zooms out. After a number of chores or criticism from your NPC (abbreviation of "non-playable character") family, Victorine will feel overwhelmed and in need of crying.

Every time Victorine needs to cry she takes on a different posture and the color of the avatar changes to a reddish tone. When this occurs the player must find an empty space in the house for her. As more family members arrive to the house, it becomes almost impossible to find an empty room for crying. The game makes the player feel that the house, that you actually cannot get out of, is a prison and that you are running out of space. This claustrophobic feeling of running out of space not only responds to a physically characteristic of in-game space scenarios of the house but to the feeling of the main character not having a space for herself where she can be free of showing how she is actually feeling.

The characters of mother and father in law are written as a very conservative and traditional family. Their dialogues are built with heteronormative sexist conservative comments. For example, the desire of Victorine to not have children will be put in question over dinner table conversation, with negative comments on her choice to not become a mother, and on how that makes her unfulfilled as a woman. Another example would be that she is expected to take care of her husband and the household, thus fulfilling the stereotype of a female caretaker. The character of Victorine is subdued to critics about her body, actions and desires. She is also objurgated by the fact she is not working at the moment, as the housework is not seen as real work.

The relationship between Victorine and her husband has traits of benevolent sexism. For example, he states that she should not smoke because "it is not good for you" and "I don't like it". Victorine accepts that comment as a sign that she is being taken care of by her husband. Even though he talks about the house chores in plural he is actually demanding Victorine to do it. He is the one that provides and protects. Victorine's husband calls her his muse, not only elevating Violet with qualities of purity; she is the provider of inspiration for him. Another important aspect of their relationship is how the husband asks for sex, as his

request always focus primarily to his own pleasure. This association also reflects how men's pleasure has always been labeled as more important than women's in society. For example, it is very common for men to be unfamiliar with women's anatomy, which could lead to misconceptions of women's pleasure on sexual encounters (Volck et al., 2013).

The narrative has a clear and direct connection to the mechanics, dialogues and events as it contributes with the feedback responses and limitations on space as you add more characters to the story. As the game proceeds, you might feel that the goal is to figure out a task combination that will let you achieve a situation where Victorine do not have to cry. There is no such possibility however, as she will always have to cry eventually.

The game ends with a cathartic moment for the main character, when she destroys the husband's painting in process in his atelier. By this moment you have been forced to enter the only space in the house where you are not allowed to go, the atelier. This space acts as a restriction and difference in privilege between the two characters. The atelier is the space that the husband uses for his creative processes and he can claim this area as his own - a privilege to which Victorine does not have any counterpart herself. The painting that she destroys is the reason for her in-laws visit in the house, and thus the direct cause of the amount of stress on the household. However, more than anything it symbolizes her husband's attitudes and ego. It is a rebellious act against the routine system she is trapped in, and makes the player feel a little relieved and empowered.

The game describes a particular situation, and imitates very accurately various factors of real life. It exemplifies sexist behaviors in a way that is understood as a critique of the system. In the case of this game, the lack of decisions affecting later moments of the game serves a purpose for the player to understand how the character feels trapped and without much power over the situation. The only moment when you have a choice is in the bed scene, where you can decide if Victorine will accept to have sex or not. From the researcher's point of view, coming from a Latin American country, this decision reflects a common conception of sex. As a Latin American woman it is very common to be told since a young age that sex represents the power that you have over men, that you can use sex for getting things from men. Is also very common to be told that as a wife you have the task of keeping your husband satisfied, if you don't he could leave you or engage in relationships with other women that can satisfy his desires. The decision of having sex in the game plays with the idea of the player accepting that power. The player could refuse sex in order to punish the husband on Victorine's behalf, or accept to see if the husband changes his behavior towards her.

The game is design for you to fail, to always arrive to the same cathartic moment. As Mariani (2016) argues, negative experiences, the one characterized by failure, may engender remarkable learning outcomes. The continuous failing in the game encourage the player to problematize the situation it presents.

4.2 Thematic Analysis of Survey

In the following chapters, the analysed results from the survey and its follow-up questions will be presented. There were 33 respondents consisting of 10 women, 22 men and 1 non-binary, from ages 18 to 34, participating in this survey (see the data for each participant in Appendix A). Respondents' academic backgrounds vary between arts, social science, and game development. Due the researcher's geographical background several respondents were also from the same geographical location, Peru, and a few of them answered the questionnaire in Spanish. From the 33 respondents 5 were selected for follow-up questions.

Throughout the rest of this thesis, whenever participants are quoted directly, or when referring to specific statements from the data, the participants will be referred to with abbreviations in the following format: P1, P2, P3, etc. (representing: participant 1, participant 2, participant 3, etc.). Each of these corresponds to a specific participant's data, which can be found in Appendix A.

The analysis was conducted through structured reading of the original data, i.e. the written answers provided by the respondents. No preconceived theories or categories were applied in order to distinguish which details were to be considered most relevant. Instead the data was decoded in its entirety, and at the end of the first decoding, the first themes were discerned. The themes were refined and expanded on by both reviewing the data repeatedly in an iterative manner, and evaluating them in terms of relevance in relation to the research scope.

The final themes were then grouped into three categories: mechanics, visual and musical aesthetics, and narrative. These categories respond to elements of the video game medium through which it can communicate to, and enable interaction from, the player (Schell, 2008). The definitions of these elements were covered in the background chapter in this thesis, and it is through them the game represents the main character's situation in different ways. The different ways the game does this would also constitute the themes retrieved from the analysis. These are: the mechanics of crying, shrinking space and looping gameplay; aesthetic use of camera movements, changing colours and background music; interpersonal

relationships represented through dialogue events. Separated into these categories, the analysis will now be presented in terms of these discerned themes.

4.2.1 Mechanics

Throughout the data gathered through the survey, every participant show that they understood the undesirable situation of the main character, who is repeatedly described with words as sad, depressed, trapped and submissive. Players point to three central mechanics as telling of the condition of the main character: crying, running out of space and the loop.

Crying

Crying is a central and recurring gameplay event in *Behind Every Great One*. The event is triggered after your complete a series of household related tasks, and puts the main character in an acute need for crying, which can be done as soon as the character locates a room without a non-player character (NPC) in it.

When asked for reasons why the players believed that the main character was feeling sad or depressed, a considerable amount of the responses referred to the main character's recurring crying. "She cries a lot" (P25) and "the constant sobbing" (P26) are examples of such responses. Integrating the unambiguous and universal act of crying into the mechanics might be the most straightforward way that the game provides insight into the emotional state of the main character. Everyone has experienced the need for crying in challenging situations at some point and thus bear negative connotations to it. That the participants perceived this as a problem or a state of failure was indicated by the fact that many made it their goal to have the character complete the daily tasks without crying.

I mean, the objective of the game is to make her pass through the day without crying of frustration and anxiety (P20)

Running out of space

Players perceive that the main character feels trapped, which they describe by referring to the game mechanics. The mechanics communicate the feeling of being trapped by taking away the safe spaces for crying from the main character at times when there are more people in the house occupying the rooms.

Over-crowded is the right word I guess. She is stuck inside a life she hates. She is also sad but I think the worst feeling is that she really feels suffocated. She cannot find a safe space for herself.(P17)

Since the playable character cannot cry in front of anyone, the game prompts the player to find an empty space to release tension and cry, but as the game progresses, the access to these spaces are gradually decreased. Players point out that the claustrophobic effect is being reinforced by the fact that you cannot get out of the house. They soon realize that this mechanic eventually forces you to disregard the prohibition of the husband and force them to get into the atelier.

Loop

Some of the responses pointed out that the lack of Victorines' life goals and the monotony of her days are responsible for her depressive state. Both the feeling of monotony and lack of life goals are communicated through the mechanics, by forcing the player to play through consecutive days in a limited and repetitive way. Every day you wake up and do three or four actions, followed by conversation events over dinner and in the bed, leaving, as some players described, "no time for personal development"(P11). Several of the participants pointed out that this routine made them feel trapped. This way, the character's situation (trapped in a house) was transmitted to the participants emotionally. The repetitive, looping gameplay conveyed the monotone life of the character in a similar way. "At some point it just became a cooking-cleaning routine"(P13), one of the participants described it. Participants also noticed that doing recreational activities took time from house chores, which in turn came with negative consequences, as failing to complete these chores resulted in the main character receiving verbal punishment during dialogue events. Thus, in order to avoid punishment, all recreational activities must be prioritized away for the sake of doing chores.

She basically can't take any time for herself, and every chore and every micro-aggression depletes her more until she breaks more (P4)

Another aspect that was pointed out by the participants was that the game does not provide enough available actions per day for you to complete all the chores that the household require. Even though players came up with and tested different strategies of play throughout the days, they were eventually forced to realize that this mechanic was rigged to make their efforts futile and that every day would be the same. This made players feel that they needed to keep playing in order to make her feel better.

I played right into it and chose the breakdown every day rather than have her berated for it, even if it happened anyway.(P4)

Sometimes the players felt responsible for the fate of Victorine, which makes them think about how they would act if they were in her situation.

I would have wanted to leave the house, leave the guy, send Gabriel's mother to fuck off, choose not to cry, tell Gabriel that he will prepare his own food and clean his own toilet.(P26)

The associations and parallels drawn by the players between their own lives and the content of the game indicated that the games portrayal and representations managed to trigger a very personal level of introspection. Playing the game could in that regard be understood as a transformative experience.

Made me reconsider and maybe reframe things, personal things... it is too strong experience for you to comment about it with someone that doesn't tell you it has played it too. (P5)

4.2.2 Visual and musical aesthetics

Another way the game managed to communicate its theme to the participants was through its *visual and musical aesthetics*. Players point out that there were some visual feedbacks that helped them understand how Victorine was feeling, mostly in the form of *change of colours and camera movements*. Players even described these visual effects as dizziness and in some cases even as headaches. The aesthetics not only helps the player to interpret what is going on with the character mentally.

The camera movements were described by the players to achieve two things: transmitting the feeling of dizziness (when Victorine feels the need for crying the camera moves from side to side) and the feeling of claustrophobia and being trapped in the house (whenever you do housework or get a negative comment the camera will zoom-in.)

Finally, the *mellow music* that accompanies the player throughout the game, is pointed out by several players as a perfect companion for the monotonous loop that the game provides.

4.2.3 Narrative

It is through the story and the *dialogues*, the players gained a grasp about the social context where the game took place. A great amount of players relate the game's main topic with negative gender roles and sexism, even without using these specific words.

A dynamic is created where the woman's job is merely to fill the mans every need, to care for the house, to be there emotionally and sexually without expecting anything in return (P1)

The relatability of the story and its truthfulness to reality made all participants answer that they considered it to be a very realistic scenario. Some of the comments on why they thought

so contained parallels between their own lives and the situation portrayed in the game, for example: “Been there” or “It is, more or less, the current status of my house...”(P13). They regard it as a common housewife situation, commenting things like “Well, I can see it in E-VE-RY-GOD-DAMN-HOME.” (P17) The story targets the housewife trope and most participants are able to recognize it and have reflections on the subject, with comments like “The idea that ‘housewife labor’ is not work being the hardest and most damaging one.” (P20).

The participants identify two main narrative moments as most revealing about the life situation and interpersonal relationships of the playable character: *the dinner table* and the *bedtime* situation.

The dinner becomes the moment when all the NPCs openly judge Victorine. Players describe this moment as the moment when Victorine feels judged. Among the participants’ comments about these series of dialogue events, the one dialogue that is mentioned the most is the one in which the mother in law judges Victorine for not wanting to have kids. This NPC is identified by the players as the subject that reinforce sexist stereotypes.

[...]they start talking about grandchildren and the woman expresses that she doesn't actually want kids. Her husbands mother is startled and completely dismisses what the woman wants and basically says it is the wife’s duty to give her grandchildren, that she cannot be a good enough wife unless she is willing to have kids. (P1)

Other dialogues commented by players at the dinner table concerns unachieved tasks, making players feel stressed about the tasks they were not able to achieve during the day.

The other narrative moment is the bedtime; this time is shared between Victorine and her husband. Most of the players comment on how he uses sex for undermining what Victorine could be feeling, increasing the feeling of being neglected and overriding her opinions and desires.

He lectures her both about the state of the house as well as her not pursuing her dreams, all under the guise of caring or "just saying." And at the end of the day, he always asks for more still. "Sorry for your terrible day, how about you give me some sex?(P4)

To summarize, the dialogues on both narrative moments manage to show the dynamics between the Victorine and the rest of characters, how they make her feel unappreciated, neglected and trapped. Of all the NPCs, the husband is the character that players mention

the most as responsible for her grievances. Most of the players describe the relationship as unbalanced in some way, claiming that the husband is chauvinistic; passive aggressive and selfish even though they understand that there is love in the relationship. The power imbalance in the relationship is being pointed out for being primary cause for how Victorine feels, because even though there is love, the character is completely clueless of the pain he is inflicting.

It might be important to point out that even though most respondents related Victorine's distress with sexist attitudes that she was exposed to, some had a different perspective. In such cases, the situation was normalized, or described simply as "a marriage" (P6). The researcher thinks this could be due cultural factors. This was not treated as a factor in the analysis however, due to the level of complexity this variable would add to the research.

4.3 Interview with developer

The interview was developed through several e-mails between the researcher and the game designer, who was also the game writer, of the game. The game was born for Ludum Dare 42 Game Jam under the theme of "Running out of space" and the first design decision was to make a game about emotional space. The intention of the game is to make the player reflect over depression and caretaker figures in relationships, and how we can disappear if we are in that role, as we override our own identity to accommodate everyone else in our life.

There wasn't any previous research on the topic for the creation of the game. It was an introspective creation because the game was built mostly with a mix of autobiographic experiences. First, the aesthetics presented in the game, and the occasional zooming in and out with the camera, are representations of how the designer of the game experiences depression and anxiety. The mechanics of having to look for an empty room for expressing feelings and cry also respond to the same experiences. The game was designed with an emotional snow balling effect, making it inevitable for Victorine to break apart.

Victorine's character represents a mixture of female characteristics that the designer found in women that have taken care of him: his mother, some friends and girlfriends. The husband character gathers selfish features that the designer has found in himself, and other male figures around him. It was important to represent the husband without making him a villain, showing him as a loving figure that is not conscience of certain things in his relationship. The rest of the family, the husband's parents, the sister and the nephew, were created to verbalize common situations the designer have experienced with his parents, in-laws and figures in other families' environments he knows. In an interview conducted by

Gutiérrez (2018) the game designer refers to the creation of the game as a transformative experience. Since the husband's character was inspired by himself, doing the reflection of what it means to be the artist focused in your work, with people around you making sacrifices and taking care of the house chores, forced him to critically examine his own behavior, which made him realize how much harm he could be doing.

The initial intention of the game wasn't to give a feminist subtext but to talk about emotional space, anxiety and the caretaker role in a relationship. The feminist aspect appears as a secondary effect merely as a reflection of our reality, by the fact that the person that takes care of the home is almost always the woman.

4.4 Preliminary results

Through this analysis, two functions of the game were discerned as particularly effective in achieving persuasive and meaningful representation of a socially harmful situation, which in this case was a benevolent sexist one. It is important to first comment on the fact that the result of this research does not apply exclusively to benevolent sexist situations however, but could be expanded to other social situations too. The first one of these functions to have the game focus on the emotional development of the main character and portraying relatable feelings that could easily be understood by the player. For example, this game uses crying as a fairly central mechanic. The second function is to use realistic portrayals of social dynamics. To show the player a relatable portrayal of social situations helps with the perception of reality and credibility of the situation portrayed and also increase how relatable the situation portrayed is.

As a result from the research on *Behind Every Great One*, the researcher also wants to propose the term *persuasive meaningful play*, a term that contains both persuasive games and meaningful play, since neither of the concepts covers the necessary ground to distinguish play that is both meaningful *and* persuasive by itself. A persuasive meaningful game would be a game that applies procedural rhetoric in a persuasive way, contains meaningful in-game choices, and has a disrupting effect and potential to change fundamental attitudes towards and beliefs about the world, which in turn could lead to significant long-term social change. The term can be used not only to describe the game explored in this research but several others, as for example *Papers Please!* (Pope, 2013). In this game the player is acts as an immigration officer in charge of checking the documents for the potentials immigrants. It has meaningful in-game choices since the decisions that the player makes in-game affect the main character story and the immigrants' fate. The game applies a good use of procedural rhetoric as its mechanics exemplifies the real process of a

day working as an immigration officer and presents real moral dilemmas. It is an immersive and emotional demanding game that persuades the player to reflect over morality around immigration policies.

5 Conclusions

5.1 Summary

Through this research, the game *Behind Every Great One* has been explored, with a focus on how video games can portray socially harmful situations in a persuasive and meaningful way. This exploration consisted of three approaches used for gathering data: textual analysis, a survey, and an interview with the developers.

The textual analysis followed the process described by Diane Carr (2017), and consisted of playing the game in question, fragmenting it and looking for new emerging meanings. The survey consisted of a series of open-ended questions, and was followed by a thematic analysis of the gathered data. The questions let the players express their perceptions of the game in order to discern how the game managed to communicate its meaning, and what effects it had on the experience of the players. Finally the interview with the developers of the game gathered insights into the thoughts and intentions that shaped the game originally.

This research resulted in two central propositions. The first of these was proposing the term *persuasive meaningful play* as a description of a game that both applies procedural rhetoric in a persuasive way, and contains meaningful in-game choices. The second was proposing two functions to incorporate in development of games that intend to use persuasive meaningful play: conveying relatable feelings through the main character, and to make a realistic portrayal of social dynamics, in order to portray the situation in a realistic and credible way.

5.2 Discussion

This research has had as a goal to explore how games can attain persuasive and meaningful representations of socially harmful situations, especially benevolent sexist situations. With a focus on studying the specifics of one game, *Behind Every Great One*, this research aimed to contribute to game developers and researchers addressing these subjects by giving insights into the ways this game manages to portray a socially harmful situation in a meaningful way.

The analyses conducted as a part of this research showed, similarly to other studies before (Järvinen 2008, Salen & Zimmerman 2004), that mechanics, visual aesthetics and narrative are indeed elements through which a game can attain meaning. But the focus of this research has not been *if*, but rather *how*. Neither does it look at just any sort of meaning, but persuasive meaningful play. Through this research, indications and suggestions on how these aspects of the game medium can be used in order to achieve persuasive meaningful

play have thus been identified. In this chapter, each of these will now be discussed along with reflections derived from the textual analysis.

First of all, if a game is aimed to do a portrayal of a harmful situation in a persuasive meaningful way, it could help achieving this by letting the players explore the emotional need of the playable character, and thus help the player perceive the situation portrayed as emotionally harmful (or at least negative). This can be achieved by making the player understand the feelings of the playable character and clearly discern which factors make her feel that way. In *Behind Every Great One*, the three mechanics used by the developers; crying, receding space and looping gameplay, in combination with the aesthetic feedback; camera movements, change of colour and mellow music, proved to be helpful for the participants to gain insight into how the playable character was feeling throughout the story. This did in turn kindle empathic reactions, reflection and the expression of opinions among the participants, indicating that the game had an impact that reached beyond strictly game-confined engagement to the players' inner lives. For Bandura (2001) introspection is critical for having an influence of outcomes on behaviour.

A game with the purpose to offer persuasive meaningful play could also benefit from displaying insight and realism when portraying social dynamics and complexity of human relationships. Real life situations, as the one showed in *Behind Every Great One*, are shaped by the social dynamics and the complexity of interpersonal relationships, which makes them relatable and realistic as claimed by participants.

Credibility of the simulation here is key if we expect to convert dispassionate viewers into engaged citizens.

Swain 2007 pp. 3

The situation and feelings portrayed in the game were based on autobiographical aspects of the developer's life, which could be a reason that the story was perceived as realistic and relatable by the players. The realistic aspect had the potential to make the players see the situations in the game from a point of personal recognition.

In response to both the representation of the emotional life of the character through mechanics and aesthetics, as well the realistic and deep portrayal of the situation through the narrative, empathetic reaction seemed to be a triggering force for reflection among players. Even though the research was not an attempt to relate the findings with concepts of empathy, worth highlighting is that the participants express empathetic relationship to the playable character when describing their perception of the game. For example, when players talk about certain situations in the game, they express parallel emotional empathy (Stephan & Finlay, 1999) by reporting firsthand experience of the perceived emotional state (e.g. helplessness or feeling overwhelmed) of the playable character. Also, in some cases, players

experienced feeling mad about the playable character's situation, which indicates that they could be experiencing reactive emotional empathy (Stephan & Finlay, 1999). Triggering emotional empathy through the narrative could thus be one entry point for meaningfully communicating the emotional aspect of the situation portrayed.

The procedural rhetoric in the game *Behind Every Great One* is built around representing social and emotional systems. The mechanics of the game have a punishing feedback system that acts as behaviour reinforcement. In the social-cognitive theory, Bandura (2001) states that mental changes can be made by environmental interactions and observation. In the case of the game, such interactions are generated by the characters and the environment. In *Behind Every Great One*, the playable character is objectified by the other characters. This objectification is portrayed in a way that the players understand as critical; persuading them to see this in a negative way. For example, one participant states that "He is trying to not hurt anyone, but at the same time he is hurting his wife with the comments and seeing her like a *sexual object*" (P19).

Something to take into consideration is the fact that not all players thought about the game in the same ways. While seeing the harmfulness of the situation portrayed, participants sometimes attribute the harmfulness to failure of communication, describing the couple as "a dull marriage with communication problems" (P28) or even as the norm by describing it as a typical marriage. Perhaps, this could be because of different social backgrounds and personal experiences. Through this research, it is not possible to see whether there is a cultural dimension to this, as this research did not use information about the nationality or cultural backgrounds of the participants as a part of the data analysed.

The diverse viewpoints among the participants seem to indicate that a game cannot guarantee to evoke a certain thought or response. It can however succeed in doing an effective portrayal nonetheless. Although a game with a purpose of providing a persuasive meaningful experience such as this one might not be perceived the same way by everyone, an effective portrayal or well-delivered message can still work as a tool for starting conversation on the subject.

The developers didn't intent to build a game that perpetuates sexist behaviours; their intention was to portray a care taker situation, which in this case was the life of a housewife. In spite of not having this intention, several participants perceived the game as a realistic portrayal of a real sexist situation. At the same time the intention of the game of being persuasive and meaningful remains as an effect even though participants made different

assumptions regarding the situation it portrayed. Some of them even had experiences that could be interpreted as transformative (thinking of the game as a rite of passage).

5.3 Future Work

For this study, the important difference between *Behind Every Great One* and other games with persuasive meaningful play is that this game contained a representation of a benevolent sexist situation. The focus on this specific subject turned out to drastically limit the selection of games that could be regarded as suitable for the study. As a result of this, this research only explores the persuasive meaningful play provided by a single game title. For further research, a good next step could be to expand the number of games to be analysed. Since the results from this thesis could be applied when talking to other social harmful situations portrayed in games, involving more games with other situations seems to be a reasonable addition for using a broader game selection. A study with multiple titles could reinforce, disprove or expand on the findings of this research. Maybe it could discover patterns in game design that proves significantly effective, or show how different types of games turn out to be more or less effective depending on the social background, gender and personality of the player.

In order to get a deepened insight into how persuasively impactful video games could be, it might be valuable to explore how effective and perhaps transformative for the player games such as this could be over time. A study that can determine whether the game had an impact on people's behaviour on a long-term basis would be useful. This could be developed as a follow-up quantitative research extending the amount of subjects. The field has a number of good examples that let users learn about social issues. However, the field has been short on examples of games that have proven to achieve measurable results in the real world (Swain, 2007, p. 805).

Finally, these two suggestions for expanding on this work could be brought together as a two-step study: the first step extending the amount of games used while still following the same structure as this study had, and the second following up the players with measurable information about change in their lives having in consideration their cultural background and gender.

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Appendix A -

Participant : P1

Gender: Female

Age: 19

What would you say the game is about?

The game is, as the name suggests, about the hidden side of every "great one" (specifically successful men) and what has enabled their success. Behind success lies of course a great deal of effort, but what has made it possible for these men to succeed is that they can put all their time into their work. Beside them are their wives, the ones keeping everything together. A dynamic is created where the woman's job is merely to fill the man's every need, to care for the house, to be there emotionally and sexually without expecting anything in return. She loses herself and is trapped in this seemingly perfect life with the sole purpose of pleasing everyone but herself. In addition she is economically dependent on her husband and thus has limited options in terms of e.g. ending the relationship and focusing on her own life.

How would you describe the woman's character?

She's a person who sacrifices her own well being in order to keep everyone else happy. Her confidence and self esteem have been completely demolished by the people around her. She seems depressed, and is unable to show it since she is the one who is supposed to keep everything together.

How do you think she is feeling?

What made you think like that?

The fact that she never gets time to do something for herself without feeling guilty about it, since that takes time from e.g. housework she could've done (which everybody then point out hasn't been done). She can't prioritize herself since nobody lets her, it's all about pleasing others. Every character in the game is happy to point out everything that needs to be done around the house or what she does wrong, however no one offers to support or help with these things. Throughout the game she continuously has to step aside just to cry it all out in order to deal with all the stress and anxiety, but of course without showing it to anyone.

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

When she, at the end of the game, completely breaks down and ruins the "masterpiece" that her husband is working on. She just couldn't hold back any longer, the cup ran over. This of course happened after the stress of not only taking care of the house, but also hosting both her husbands parents as well as her sister and nephew whom all put tons of pressure on her.

How would you describe the man's character?

The husband feels the pressure of being the sole provider of the family, but also feels that he now needs to be as (preferably even more) successful with his upcoming project as his last. Something which is of course making him stressed and anxious. However he is also incredibly self centered, it's all about him and his career. He fails to notice how his wife is feeling and doesn't at all appreciate all the work she does at home.

What made you think like that?

He confesses these feelings of not being enough and experiencing all this pressure when he and his wife are about to go to bed one night. However not once in the game does he truly ask her or wonder how SHE is feeling. At the start of the game he points out that she "doesn't do anything" and should start a hobby, and literally in the following sentence comments on things he thinks "they" (she) should get done around the house (such as clean the bathroom, do dishes etc). He also points out how lucky she is to be economically supported by him, thus allowing her to focus on whatever she wants to in life, completely ignoring the fact that all she has time for and is expected to do is to care for the household.

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

Well one example is that he not once offers to help her when he is injured and no longer can focus on work. All he does is expecting her to care for him. Another example is how he opens up (as I spoke about in a previous question). I also noticed that when he is displeased with her or she does something for herself he sometimes punishes her by very distinctly showing disappointment, not saying he loves her (which he usually does) etc.

How would you describe the relationship between the two characters?

As I've mentioned previously, the wife is completely dependent on her husband and devotes her life to pleasing him and everyone else. He is the provider of the family and she is his rock, the support system that allows him to focus on work.

What made you think like that?

Literally the entire game.

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

There are plenty of good examples throughout the game, many which I've already mentioned previously.

How would you describe the relationship between the two main characters and the family visiting?

It is obvious that the husbands parents are very much inspecting and assessing his wife in every aspect of her being. The mother especially is very protective and almost patronizing towards her son as she still somewhat sees him as a child and doesn't completely trust his wife to care for him. However the father is much more indifferent and doesn't really make much of an impression. It's clear that the man is annoyed that they're staying and he doesn't really enjoy his parents being there. The wife as usual just tries to please them, however the mother constantly makes remarks indicating that she isn't good enough for her son.

What made you think like that?

The man talks to his wife about how he dislikes his parents are there and that he is going to try to make them leave, and he also defends her when his mother makes rude remarks about his wife. Pretty much every single time the mother and the woman speak she makes some sort of comment indicating she has done something wrong or that she needs to improve herself, e.g. "you should loose weight", "wow you really can't take care of plants", "well this food tastes.. poor", "those grey hairs really didn't do you any favors".

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

One moment that comes to mind is when they start talking about grandchildren and the woman expresses that she doesn't actually want kids. Her husbands mother is startled and completely dismisses what the woman wants and basically says it is the wifes duty to give her grandchildren, that she cannot be a good enough wife unless she is willing to have kids.

Did you replay the game?

No

How much time did you play the game?

In case that you replay the game, why did you do it?

Do you feel that this scenario could realistic?

Yes

Why?

I believe this is a common dynamic in many heterosexual relationships. Society still upholds the norm stating that women are the ones taking care of the household, which is something that prevents them from focusing on their own lives and careers. Men are not expected to care for these things the same way women are, instead they are supposed to have a successful career. Of course, in Sweden things are changing and relationships are becoming more and more equal in terms of these things, however that doesn't mean that this dynamic doesn't still exist. And in a lot of other countries around the world it is still expected that women don't work as soon as they start a family or get married. Largely, women are still seen as people made to please everyone but themselves, and this phenomenon can be found in every aspect of womens lives.

Participant : P2

Gender: female

Age: 44

What would you say the game is about?

Communication and attitude

How would you describe the woman's character?

Like and empathic person, strong and open

How do you think she is feeling?

What made you think like that?

She's attitud

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

When there are chatting in bed

How would you describe the man's character?

Docile and emphatic

What made you think like that?

because his a thoughtful and considered person

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

When they are having dinner

How would you describe the relationship between the two characters?

great

What made you think like that?

Because they sopport each other and communicated a lot

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

-

How would you describe the relationship between the two main characters and the family visiting?

-

What made you think like that?

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

Did you replay the game?

Yes

How much time did you play the game?

Few minutes

In case that you replay the game, why did you do it?

because I didn't knew how it works

Do you feel that this scenario could realistic?

Yes

Why?

because sometimes it happens

Participant: P3

Gender: female

Age: 31

What would you say the game is about?

Domestic life i guess

How would you describe the woman's character?

Bland

How do you think she is feeling?

Bored

What made you think like that?

She doesnt really do anything except clean the house and support her husband

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

The only time she moves she only does chores

How would you describe the man's character?

Meh

What made you think like that?

The whole part of I would be dead if it werent for you weirded me out

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

The begining conversation when he was a bit much

How would you describe the relationship between the two characters?

They love each other

What made you think like that?

They say so

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

They say that they love each other at one point of their conversation

How would you describe the relationship between the two main characters and the family visiting?

I never saw any family visiting

What made you think like that?

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

Did you replay the game?

No

How much time did you play the game?

less than 10 minutes

In case that you replay the game, why did you do it?

Do you feel that this scenario could realistic?

Yes

Why?

It feels like domestic reality. Its maybe a little too realistic to keep me entertained

Participant: P4

Gender: Male

Age: 31

What would you say the game is about?

Microaggressions, sexism, objectification, emotional abuse

How would you describe the woman's character?

Depressed, vulnerable, helpless, exhausted

How do you think she is feeling?

-

What made you think like that?

She basically can't take any time for herself, and every chore and every microaggression depletes her more until she breaks down. She does all she can in a day and it's never enough, yet no one thinks to chip in and help, but only complains. It's always about other people and never about her.

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

I suppose the most interesting dynamic is with the sister, who is trying to be supportive, but doesn't actually take her feelings into account either. She says that she has her back and won't let the mother in law bully her, but she never asks if that's what she wants, and in that way objectifies and projects her own wants and needs onto her too.

How would you describe the man's character?

Sexist, self-centered, the embodiment of toxic masculinity

What made you think like that?

He's only superficially caring, and only insofar as it affects him. He "just points out" chores that haven't been done, but never thinks to help. He apologizes for his parents, but doesn't realize he's doing the exact same thing to her. He's incredibly pretentious and rude about his work. He lectures her both about the state of the house as well as her not pursuing her dreams, all under the guise of caring or "just saying." And at the end of the day, he always asks for more still. "Sorry for your terrible day, how about you give me some sex?"

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

In the end, after having gone on and on about how great he is and how much better than everyone else, he finally admits to being depressed and feeling like a con artist. That moment is kind of the culmination of his self-centeredness, he thinks that the only bad thing in their lives is that he fell off the ladder and thus his parents had to come. He thinks otherwise everything was great. "But that's not quite it, is it?" he says, and then the next comment is

also exclusively about himself and his depression and how he feels. On top of not helping, not caring, putting her down and complaining, pushing her around and explaining to her how her biological clock will make her change her mind when the time comes, he demands that she take care of his emotions. And then, as always, asking for sex on top of that. He views her as a service animal and calls it love.

How would you describe the relationship between the two characters?

Abusive

What made you think like that?

I think I kinda covered that already in the previous segment.

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

Again, the final moment in bed.

How would you describe the relationship between the two main characters and the family visiting?

Also abusive

What made you think like that?

The parents act in the same problematic way as the husband does, only that his mother is more overtly rude and the father more subtly so through jokes and backhanded compliments.

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

Around the dinner table, when the mother attacks her about her weight and the father defends her, but all while calling her chubby, which is still putting her down for her weight, just packaged nicer. The husband also does very little to defend her, the most he does to tell them he'd "prefer if they didn't talk about his wife this way," like he's more concerned with them judging his property rather than being concerned about her feelings and meaningfully defending her.

Did you replay the game?

No

How much time did you play the game?

15min maybe?

In case that you replay the game, why did you do it?

Do you feel that this scenario could realistic?

Yes

Why?

This seems like a really common thing, so much so that a lot of this would probably seem perfectly normal and healthy to a lot of people. Perhaps I'm cynical, but I even think that if the mechanic of the walls closing in and her breaking down was removed, this could seem like a pretty normal resource management game to many. I mean, I hope I'm wrong, but microaggressions seem to be a thing that most people struggle with understanding, and since most of the things that are said sound superficially caring and concerned or like "just saying, no offense," the damaging impact they have might be missed. They certainly too often are in real life.

FOLLOW-UP

R: Well, first thank you for playing. Do you feel there were more things do you wanted to know that didn't fit the questionnaire?

OH! A thing I loved about it is how her space is being taken up

More and more rooms become unavailable for her breakdowns, I saw where that was going just before the sister arrived and was very pleased with that mechanic

It's really well-designed and very well-written. It really took me a bit to figure out what was going on, so that was really satisfying to see the story being told through mechanics and the writing being nice and subtle that you don't even really notice it until you get the first set of "just saying" reprimands for not doing all the chores. I even did a lot small things like smoke and read in the beginning. I think the only thing I did was cook and that was kinda by accident and going through the interactions one by one, and up until then I still thought it was a loving relationship, because it started out sounding that way. I really like that. And I always refused sex, but in the beginning I only did it to see if his tone would shift if I did, but he reacted fine, so I thought it wasn't a big deal even. Very neat.

R: I did exactly the same the first time I played it. And got really mad when he told me I should smoke and he didn't like me doing that

P4: Yup, and just this tone, you shouldn't smoke, but you should do something more with your life, do something that makes you happy, but btw, the floor is dirty, I'm just telling you in case you hadn't noticed

R: yes!

P4: So next time I tried to do the chores and was surprised when she broke down and didn't quite get it at first, because it didn't happen the first time when I interacted with things, but then I noticed, those things take the stress away and zoom out, while the others zoom in. And only then did I see that you actually can't do everything and have to break down and still get shit on. Awesome stuff. Well, mechanically at least

R: Yes! I actually choose that game after analyzing all this stuff. Did you feel you tried to have any tactic for the game.

P4: Though I'm just realizing... Even though I knew I couldn't possibly win, I still tried to do as many chores and especially the ones I knew people had mentioned before or were important to them, so she doesn't get shit on more. That's super interesting actually, even though I knew it was a losing battle, I played right into it and chose the breakdown every day rather than have her berated for it, even if it happened anyway.

Does the game change if I don't do anything but relax everyday? I'm really curious to play again now...

But it's amazing that they got me to play along so completely. Fucking genius

R: It is super interesting! So you were playing in order for her to be good! I wonder if there were more players like you actually.

P4: Yeah, I was just thinking it would be cool if they collected stats how people chose to play that game. Because it never really occurred to me to not do the most chores I could, and even plan to never let the same thing slide twice in a row

God I love this so much

I think even when I thought about replaying, that I would try to do a "perfect" run, meaning do as much as I can to cause as little fuss as possible, but not to not do it and relax as much as possible. Wild.

Well, thanks for doing this study and bringing it to my attention, and for talking to me about it now, this is getting more interesting and exciting by the minute

R: Nono I'm the one that is so grateful for you responses and interest! I find it so interesting that you try to do all this stuff for improving the narrative for the woman character. In any moment did you think of the moments in the table as punishment?

P4: Well yeah, I was dreading them after the first day

And I guess in a way I took it as a win when I got only one line about something even though more chores were missing

I kinda figured out quickly that his shirts don't matter that much, I did the second day because he had complained before, but I never did it again because it didn't get mentioned

Participant: P5

Gender: Masculino

Age: 32

What would you say the game is about?

La depresión que sufre Victoria y la ceguera de todos a su alrededor respecto a ella.

How would you describe the woman's character?

Deprimida, servicial, protectora, atrapada.

How do you think she is feeling?

What made you think like that?

Todo.

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

Como a pesar de que claramente no se siente bien (llora cada día por medio), aún continúa haciendo lo que considera es necesario para que todos a su alrededor estén cómodos.

How would you describe the man's character?

Egocéntrico, indolente, impávido, bien intencionado.

What made you think like that?

Todo

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

Los momentos en la cama, como habla de él siempre, y no se da cuenta de lo grave que está Victorine, pero sí de que algo anda mal; a veces pide perdón y busca arreglar las cosas, pero no dura mucho. También: qué onda ese cuadro de tres metros de él mismo.

How would you describe the relationship between the two characters?

Strained

What made you think like that?

Llantos y silencios.

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

Los momentos antes de dormir.

How would you describe the relationship between the two main characters and the family visiting?

Strained

What made you think like that?

Llantos, silencio y conversaciones pasivo agresivas.

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

Las cenas.

Did you replay the game?

No

How much time did you play the game?

25 minutos

In case that you replay the game, why did you do it?

No lo hice, pero lo haría para saber si cambia

Do you feel that this scenario could realistic?

Yes

Why?

<https://english.emmaclit.com/2017/05/20/you-shouldve-asked/>

FOLLOW UP:

P5: duro y opresivo jueguin

R: jajajaja oye gracias por contestar!!!

P5: my pleasure

lo iba a jugar por segunda vez, pero cuando ví que no podía escapar paré

me hizo pensar esas cosas sobre housewives

R: Sí, No importa lo que hagas siempre ibas a tener el mismo outcome. Pensaste en cosas nuevas? Sientes que te falto decir algo?

P5: Son cosas que he pensado / discutido

la atmósfera muy buena

los diálogos buenos, creíbles

un poco españoles

R: A bueno es un juego español. Te puedo hacer unas preguntas más?

P5: No tengo mucho tiempo

R: Viendo que casi no tienes tiempo, Solo quería preguntarte. Hablaste con alguien sobre el juego? O quizás inspiró a que tuvieras alguna conversación relacionada?

P5: Solo lo jugué

Y sí me hizo plantear cosas

Mías internas

Lo comenté contigo, pero no con nadie más. Es que creo que es fuerte como para comentarlo con alguien que no te conste que también lo haya jugado

Participant: P6

Age: 29

Gender: Male

What would you say the game is about?

A desperate housewife

How would you describe the woman's character?

sumisa

How do you think she is feeling?

estresada

What made you think like that?

lloraba todos los días por hacer lo que no le gustaba

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

las cenas familiares donde la critican a más no poder y ella no contesta ni se defiende

How would you describe the man's character?

ególatra

What made you think like that?

el cuadro de tres metros de sí mismo

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

hablaba de sí mismo todas las noches antes de intentar tener sexo

How would you describe the relationship between the two characters?

es un matrimonio

What made you think like that?

ella sigue ahí

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

ella no tenía un trabajo, dependía económicamente de él y se encargaba de la casa mientras él trabajaba

How would you describe the relationship between the two main characters and the family visiting?

complacientes con las visitas

What made you think like that?

parecía que los anfitriones estaban al servicio de las visitas

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

cuando le piden a ella que limpie el polvo y los baños como si fuera un hotel

Did you replay the game?

Yes

How much time did you play the game?

90 minutos

In case that you replay the game, why did you do it?

para ver si el resultado podía ser distinto, pero no

Do you feel that this scenario could realistic?

Yes

Why?

en el mundo hay de todo

Participant: P7

Gender: Male

Age: 24

Play the Game

Well, I played this game for 20-30 mins and I see it like a visual novel games. I have to care about anything I do and responsible for every decisions. However, when I want to play more, the game is stuck when I talk to the kid in bedroom (maybe a bug? I can't do anything) so I have to cancel playing. Anyway, I interest this game.

What would you say the game is about?

About Victoria and her trouble life, she have not have job yet, can't find anything interest her, and the way to deal with her problem by player's decision.

How would you describe the woman's character?

A suffered woman, she have many problems in her life.

How do you think she is feeling?

She tired, she is judge by everyone view. But still, she love her husband very much.

What made you think like that?

Well, She do whatever people tell her, but she not do anything for her. So she sacrifice herself for her husband joy.

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

Every moment. But I unlucky have stuck when talk to the boy in bedroom, the game is not let me do anything further.

How would you describe the man's character?

Sometime selfish, sometime arrogance, but loving her so much.

What made you think like that?

Allow her sister to live home and tell her his parent character.

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

Everytime she enters the room, the man don't let her in .

How would you describe the relationship between the two characters?

Wife and husband

What made you think like that?

They have sex everytime, love each other and care each other.

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

Nope

How would you describe the relationship between the two main characters and the family visiting?

Well, two main characters have problems with parent, especially the woman.

What made you think like that?

His mother complain to her daughter-in-law every time

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

Nope

Did you replay the game?

Yes

How much time did you play the game?

20-30 mins, maybe more.

In case that you replay the game, why did you do it?

I meet bug in game (stuck when talk to the boy at bedroom, after giving a blowjob).

Do you feel that this scenario could realistic?

Yes

Why?

It happen in our life and I have seen this happen before.

Participant: P8

Gender: male

Age: 25

What would you say the game is about?

Acerca de una relación de pareja tóxica. Me gusto el mensaje de como la rutina y la falta de metas, la lleva a la frustración y luego a deprimirse. Ninguno de los personajes parece tener una motivación que los haga feliz, mas bien señalan los defectos de victoria para sentirse mejor.

How would you describe the woman's character?

Completamente pasiva. Sus reacciones buscan evitar todo tipo de conflicto.

How do you think she is feeling?

Reprimida y frustrada.

What made you think like that?

La rutina y los constantes micro-agresiones por parte de los familiares. Nadie la termina por atacar directamente, pero la menosprecian de distintas maneras.

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

En la primera cena con los padres, la suegra empieza a hablar del aspecto de victoria. El suegro siempre haciendo referencia a la familia, como diciéndole que es indiferente hacia ellos (los suegros).

How would you describe the man's character?

Egocentrista.

What made you think like that?

Se preocupa más de su arte. Su interés por victoria es como hacia a un objeto (su musa). Sus interacciones con ella son más que nada para pedirle que se encargue de las tareas del hogar o por sexo.

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

La primera conversación que tienes cuando habla de como victoria es su musa y que no sabe que haría sin ella.

How would you describe the relationship between the two characters?

toxica, pero de la forma convencional.

What made you think like that?

Si bien es cierto no existen agresiones físicas o verbales. Existe esta dinámica de indiferencia entre ellos. No se llegan a involucrar íntimamente entre los objetivos del otro a pesar de vivir y trabajar juntos. Viven juntos pero desconectados. Ambos dependen uno del otro. Victoria lo necesita por que no trabaja y no tiene un proposito/pasion. El esposo esta con victoria porque la necesita como inspiracion y para su cuidado.

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

El final, que por cierto me gusto mucho. Luego de confesar que el también no se siente con un propósito, solo atina a solicitar sexo nuevamente. De muestra como después todo se necesitan el uno al otro, pero por las razones equivocadas. No se quieren, se necesitan.

How would you describe the relationship between the two main characters and the family visiting?

Me gusto rol de la familia. Ayuda exponer las deficiencias en la relación de la pareja.

What made you think like that?

Las interacciones con los familiares. Cada empieza a ocupar un espacio del hogar, quitándote cosas que hacer. Esto hace que aportes menos en el hogar. Cuando quieres hacer una tarea y hay alguien allí te juzgan.

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

La ultima cena con la discucion sobre de tener hijos.

Did you replay the game?

No

How much time did you play the game?

~30 min

In case that you replay the game, why did you do it?

-

Do you feel that this scenario could realistic?

Yes

Why?

Este tipo de relaciones interdependientes son cada vez más comunes.

FOLLOW-UP

Rw: Primero quería preguntarte si tenías algo más que comentar sobre el juego que sientas no tuviste espacio para poner?

P8: pucha no me acuerdo. Pero creo que no

R: Y entre que jugaste y ahora... pensaste en el juego? o conversaste con alguien sobre él?

P8: Me hizo recordar un libro que lei en el colegio

Casa de muñecas

R: como así? sobre que es el libro?

P8: es una obra creo.

[https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Casa_de_mu%C3%B1ecas_\(obra_de_teatro\)](https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Casa_de_mu%C3%B1ecas_(obra_de_teatro)) Trata de una ama de casa tambien pero tiene hijos, el final tambien es interesante

R: Y lo comentaste con alguien

P8: Si, mas que nada sobre serious games. No tanto sobre el tema en sí.

los temas que explora el juego.

Converse con algunas personas sobre la importancia de hacer juegos que aborden temas mas serios

R: Tuviste alguna clase de estrategia cuando estabas jugando? cambiabas algo entre día y día?

P8: mmm... Creo que mas que nada trataba de explorar lo mas que podía en cada dia y me ponia a fumar si necesitaba pasar el rato jaja

R: crees que hay alguna característica en el juego que te ayudaba a entender como se sentía ella?

P8: Lo que note interesante fue como a medida que llega mas gente a la casa tienes menos cosas que hacer. Lo que te hace sentir mas aburrido/inutil

R: y cuando jugabas... le dabas preferencia a algunas acciones sobre otras? Fumar era de tus favoritas?

P8: Le daba preferencia a las que los npc me decian. Como cuando te dicen que son varios y deberias limpiar el baño. No diria que fumar era mi favorita, solo que era una de las siempre podia hacer para que el tiempo pasara mas rápido

R: Y que no te griten en la cena fue en algún momento algo que marcó como jugabas?

P8: No recuerdo si me gritaron en algún momento. Simplemente obedecia lo que decian

R: También cuando escribiste sobre como describirías la relación pusiste "toxica, pero de la forma convencional" a que te refieres con convencional?

P8: Por convencional me refiero a una relacion donde hay violencia verbal o falta de comunicación. O poco respeto por los intereses del otro

Participant: P9

Age: 22

Gender: female

Play the Game

What would you say the game is about?

manipulative relationship

How would you describe the woman's character?

lack of self confidence, dependant on her husbands recognition

How do you think she is feeling?

very sad

What made you think like that?

crying, always being scolded for doing something she enjoys

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

the first time she stumbled while walking and then cried

How would you describe the man's character?

arrogant, high ego

What made you think like that?

always talk too highly of himself

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

when he fell down the ladder and told her to get out

How would you describe the relationship between the two characters?

disfunctional - only works due to the low confidence of the woman

What made you think like that?

cause if she would actually speak her mind, he wouldnt 't "love" her

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

again, when he fell and yelled at her to get out

How would you describe the relationship between the two main characters and the family visiting?

family is the same as the husband

What made you think like that?

didn't even bother to hear her opinion on things, answerd for themselves

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

when they talked about her finding a job, but brushed it off quickly

Did you replay the game?

No

How much time did you play the game?

I probably will after dinner

In case that you replay the game, why did you do it?

would intruige me what happens if you make the womn unhappy to begin wthi

Do you feel that this scenario could realistic?

Yes

Why?

many people are stuck in relationships likle that - need to learn that they can get out of them

Participant: P10

Gender: barón

Age: 28

What would you say the game is about?

la convivencia

How would you describe the woman's character?

sumisa

How do you think she is feeling?

mal

What made you think like that?

los efectos de color y movimiento

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

cuando le dio dolor de cabeza....

How would you describe the man's character?

un imbecil

What made you think like that?

porque es un déspota

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

todas las noches cuando teniamos sexo

How would you describe the relationship between the two characters?

terrible

What made you think like that?

por las conversaciones estúpidas

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

cuando el persoanje le dice al otro que lo quiere todo el tiempo falsamente

How would you describe the relationship between the two main characters and the family visiting?

muy mal

What made you think like that?

solo se exigen cosas de mala manera

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

cuando cenan

Did you replay the game?

No

How much time did you play the game?

media hora

In case that you replay the game, why did you do it?

para hacer las cosas distinto y ver si algo cambia

Do you feel that this scenario could realistic?

Yes

Why?

deben haber relaciones asi de sumisas

Participant: P11

Gender: Male

Age: 35

What would you say the game is about?

Wife got his back. No own life, Criticism, depression

How would you describe the woman's character?

Caring, shy, introvert, unappreciated, serving,

How do you think she is feeling?

depressed, unappreciated, unfulfilled

What made you think like that?

No time for personal development, criticised, serving, crying, silent

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

Crying, slowly moving, surrounding colors, ruining painting

How would you describe the man's character?

passive aggressive, critical, demanding, intelligent, eloquent, reflective,

What made you think like that?

Dinner, Bed situation

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

Dinners, Bed situation

How would you describe the relationship between the two characters?

She tries to keep him satisfied. He pretends to care about her but demands service. He's manipulating her.

What made you think like that?

Demanding service, reminding her about her about household jobs simultaneously telling her she could do what she wishes for personal progress. In reality there is no time. Not answering on "I love you!"

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

You are so lucky... others wish...

How would you describe the relationship between the two main characters and the family visiting?

He wants her to serve his family while trying to prevent her sister to stay.

What made you think like that?

He says it "She tries to take advantage of you" (he's right in that case) Slightly defending his Wife but does not put mother in place.

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

Bed situation, Dinner

Did you replay the game?

No

How much time did you play the game?

Not sure.. 45 Min +-

In case that you replay the game, why did you do it?

/

Do you feel that this scenario could realistic?

Yes

Why?

Seems like a "regular" situation. But often it's the other way around. Many Womn rule the homes imo

Participant: P12

Gender: Male

Age: 24

What would you say the game is about?

About depression

How would you describe the woman's character?

like a person with depression, is someone who can not control their emotions or thoughts because of the disease that she has

How do you think she is feeling?

it's hard to think how she feels, because I've never felt like her. But I understand his way of being and his reactions

What made you think like that?

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

Ye, I remember the conversation on the dinner where Gabriel talk with Vi about that she can be w/e she wants, cuz she was privileged. I already heard similar things towards me, but no one choose where one is born, just where are we going

How would you describe the man's character?

with the end it became clear to me that he is someone insecure

What made you think like that?

Ego and arrogance are common things in insecure people, but when it's over many people realize what they feared

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

How would you describe the relationship between the two characters?

like two cards leaning on each other

What made you think like that?

alone they are fragile, but next to the other they can maintain a balance

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

At the beginning, only one point of view is seen, and one would think that Gabriel is the villain, but each one have different problems and in a relationship it's important to solve them together

How would you describe the relationship between the two main characters and the family visiting?

as I said, they are like two cards so when they want to form a tower, they simply collapse

What made you think like that?

if you can't solve your problems, how do you expect to solve other's problems

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

don't exactly, but maybe Gabriel's feeling of not getting the respect of his parents

Did you replay the game?

Yes

How much time did you play the game?

around 1 hour

In case that you replay the game, why did you do it?

well i play it 3 times, the first one incomplete cuz a bug, the second one cuz I wanted to finish it, and the last cuz I really enjoy the story behind so I wanted to know more choosing other options

Do you feel that this scenario could realistic?

Yes

Why?

it's not something that necessarily happens in such a short space of days, and that's why we don't realize when it happens

Participant: P13

Gender: Female

Age: 21

What would you say the game is about?

Depression and sexism

How would you describe the woman's character?

Mostly passive and submissive, someone that prefers to avoid conflict.

How do you think she is feeling?

Pressured (some times indirectly), lonely and overwhelmed. At the beginning she also seemed to be feeling a little empty/lethargic.

What made you think like that?

The ambient (crying, dark red/brown background, music), dialogues and how the gameplay didn't allow for you to do everything you had to do in a day (at some point it just became a cooking-washing-cleaning routine)

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

The first time she cries after the In-Laws arrive, when she has to go hide in the bathroom to cry while *in her own house*

How would you describe the man's character?

Selfish at worse and unconscious at best, though he's not an awful human being.

What made you think like that?

He shows to care about his wife and how *others* make her feel, but that's it. He seems either incapable or unwilling to see how his words/behaviour/decisions also affect his wife, and is more worried about what he wants than what she needs. Plus, his stereotypical "you can not understand it" artist actitud make him look even worse.

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

Every single time he asks for sex except the first two/three times. But the worst ones are the two last ones, when he asks if he can jerk off if they're not going to have sex and when he asks for a blowjob after nothing that his wife isn't feeling well or at least isn't really into it.

How would you describe the relationship between the two characters?

Stranded, the distance between them getting bigger each day. Also, it isn't a horizontal relationship.

What made you think like that?

The woman has to hide to cry. The man just keeps asking things from her, never suggests the idea of helping her around, let alone do some cleaning in his own house. And their conversations are usually about him, his work, or what he wants/needs from her.

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

The dinner he tells her she should "find a job or a hobby, something to do that would make her happy" after she had to spend all day cleaning and cooking in the same conversation he told her something "needs to be cleaned".

How would you describe the relationship between the two main characters and the family visiting?

Difficult. They seemed to get along better with the father and nephew, but the mother and sister were both conflictive and passive-aggressive, the mother even being just aggressive some times.

What made you think like that?

All the conversations, everyone was either trying to push their wishes/needs/ideas on to the main characters (mainly the woman) or being down right mean to them.

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

The first dinner with the In-Laws. When the mother insists that the woman isn't taking good care of the plants even if you have been taking care of them, and she will take care of them since no one else can. It settled her character for the rest of the game.

Did you replay the game? Yes

How much time did you play the game?

An hour, more or less.

In case that you replay the game, why did you do it?

I wanted to see some dialogues I missed.

Do you feel that this scenario could be realistic? Yes

Why?

It is, more or less, the current status of my house. Not the same specific situation, but I would say that feeling is similar.

FOLLOW-UP

R:

Quería saber si después de que jugaste, pensaste en el juego o hablaste con alguien sobre él?

P26:

Estuve hablando con mi novio mientras respondía la encuesta después del juego porque le dio curiosidad qué estaba jugando. Por mi cuenta también estuve pensando en el juego, más que nada porque me recordó un poco a el estado de mi vida familiar en este momento

R:

Tuviste alguna estrategia de juego? cambiaste cosas mientras pasaban los días (En el juego)

P26:

Mi primera estrategia fue intentar probarlo todo. Cuando eso no funcionó cambié a pensar que la cocina era el trigger para el cambio de día (porque fue lo último que hice el primer día), así que intenté hacer todo lo demás antes de cocinar la cena. Luego me di cuenta que eso no funcionaba así, que sólo podía realizar 3 o 4 acciones por día y que todos los días todas las tareas estaban disponibles/la casa siempre estaba sucia y desordenada. Al final repetía un loop de cocinar->limpiar los platos->limpiar la sala mientras intentaba hablar con tanta gente como fuera posible

Durante los primeros 2 o 3 días (antes que llegaran los suegros) también intentaba realizar las actividades que yo asumo eran de relajación (leer, estar en la computadora, fumar) más que nada por probar. Obviamente lo de estar probando no duró mucho

R:

Todos estos cambios de estrategia fueron para lograr algo en especial?

P26:

Al inicio quería probarlo todo e intentar encontrar un balance, pero luego me di cuenta que eso era imposible, así que terminé por concentrarme en las cosas que yo pensaba causarían los peores resultados si no las completaba (o sea, que no estuviera lista la comida)

R:

En algún momento pensaste que harás tu si estuvieras en una situación así?

P26:

La verdad es que sí, a diferencia de con otro tipo de situaciones, que usualmente me llevan a fantasear y pensar que yo "no dejaría que esto me pase", en esta ocasión pensaba cosas como "pucha, yo colapso o me voy".

Participant P: 14

Gender: female

Age: 28

What would you say the game is about?

How toxic gender roles are still haunting our society.

How would you describe the woman's character?

I would describe it as someone who conforms to society's idea how what she has to do/say and how to act. Also the male character at times was nasty or close to verbally abusive.

How do you think she is feeling?

trapped

What made you think like that?

She hasn't found the tools to get out a situation she doesn't like

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

When he says that she'll jinx something like his art just by going into another room.

How would you describe the man's character?

territorial and possessive

What made you think like that?

the way he expressed himself about him and his partner

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

the many times he called her my muse

How would you describe the relationship between the two characters?

as a typical toxic gender conforming relationship

What made you think like that?

the way they treated each other

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

when she was made to do all the typical female chores

How would you describe the relationship between the two main characters and the family visiting?

What made you think like that?

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

Did you replay the game?

No

How much time did you play the game?

5

In case that you replay the game, why did you do it?

-

Do you feel that this scenario could realistic?

Yes

Why?

i've seen it

Participant : P15

Gender: Male

Age: 22

What would you say the game is about?

An artist's wife and her struggle with the object life

How would you describe the woman's character?

Sad, oppressed

How do you think she is feeling?

Depressed

What made you think like that?

The fact that she cannot perform any action many times without bursting in tears

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

No

How would you describe the man's character?

Stereotyped, proud, horny

What made you think like that?

The fact that he wasn't realizing he was hurting his wife, neither in the end, where he says "I'm depressed"

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

No

How would you describe the relationship between the two characters?

Fake

What made you think like that?

He wants to own her, she is just passive

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

No

How would you describe the relationship between the two main characters and the family visiting?

The same relationship between the man and the woman

What made you think like that?

Many analogies in the plot

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

No

Did you replay the game?

No

How much time did you play the game?

Until the end

In case that you replay the game, why did you do it?

-

Do you feel that this scenario could realistic?

Yes

Why?

Because I know many friends who are in that situation

Participant: P16

Gender: female

Age: 29

What would you say the game is about?

Invisible everyday abusive actions that are overlooked. Narcissistic personality

How would you describe the woman's character?

Trapped

How do you think she is feeling?

Undervalued and with low self stem

What made you think like that?

She cries every morning. There is a feeling of dizziness every time she completes a house chore. There is not way to escape from this apartment.

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

There is a feeling of dizziness every time she completes a house chore. There is not way to escape from this apartment. All other characters tell her what she should do.

How would you describe the man's character?

Narcissist

What made you think like that?

Only thinks about his work, and what other may think of him. He wants her to do everything that makes him look good to to others.

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

Comparing his work to others. Always asking for confirmation of his action.

How would you describe the relationship between the two characters?

unbalanced

What made you think like that?

the division of roles is clear, but he or she doesn't not actually talk about why it has to be that way.

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

-

How would you describe the relationship between the two main characters and the family visiting?

-

What made you think like that?

-

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

Did you replay the game?

No

How much time did you play the game?

5 minutes

In case that you replay the game, why did you do it?

-

Do you feel that this scenario could realistic?

Yes

Why?

There are many women that because they don't have the resources (economic and emotional) makes it difficult to think themselves outside the abusive situation they are living in.

Participant: P17

Gender: M

Age: 32

What would you say the game is about?

Short answer: Toxic masculinity. Long(ish) answer: It was about a woman who is obviously depressed as no one in her family seems to care about her needs. Also her husband is a jerk.

How would you describe the woman's character?

She is (was) a decent person I guess. Then at some point she stopped enjoying life and have her own career. It was clearly not her choice. This emptiness grew inside her into depression.

How do you think she is feeling?

Over-crowded is the right word i guess. She is stuck inside a life she hates. She is also sad but I think the worst feeling is that she really feels suffocated. She cannot find a safe space for herself. Also she's probably feeling inferior as nobody praises her for what she did, but everyone criticize her for what she did not do.

What made you think like that?

Her safe spaces are being occupied by other family members. Watching it made me furious.

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

Yep, "my sister does not want me go in her room" was the tipping point for me.

How would you describe the man's character?

He's not a terrible person, but although he's an artist, he still expects "womanly duties" from his wife. That's what he had learned from his family I guess. Also he's a bit of a momma's boy.

What made you think like that?

Sex scenes were disturbing. Also he does not praise what the woman does, as if they are her duties.

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

All of it?

How would you describe the relationship between the two characters?

That's extremely toxic.

What made you think like that?

He does not understand her needs. Period.

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

Especially, at the dinner with family, he does not let the woman to express herself. Mansplaining much?

How would you describe the relationship between the two main characters and the family visiting?

Father was alright I guess. Although mother is apparently much more dominant and she is "looking after her sonnie". And yes, she clearly did not allow Gabriel to grow up. That's dangerous.

What made you think like that?

Not specific moments, but the tone overall. She was also soooo condesending to Valentine

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

"I can give you some recipes" and "biological clock is ticking" replies. God that was frustrating.

Did you replay the game?

No

How much time did you play the game?

15 - 20 minutes i guess. Until the ending (or one of the endings, if i am not mistaken)

In case that you replay the game, why did you do it?

-

Do you feel that this scenario could realistic?

Yes

Why?

Well, I can see it E-VE-RY-GOD-DAMN-HOME.

Participant: P18

Gender: Female

Age: 27

I already know that game! I find that idea very powerful and made me think that was the first time that I played as a housewife

What would you say the game is about?

Gender roles, domestic work and depression

How would you describe the woman's character?

A woman overwhelmed with the situation, trapped on her own house and relationships

How do you think she is feeling?

Trapped and inside a loop

What made you think like that?

The mechanics of the game and the dialogues

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

The moment when she breaks and starts crying, with the camera movements and the change of background color.

How would you describe the man's character?

A selfish man who didn't want to see or didn't care genuinely about her partner

What made you think like that?

The bedtime moment, when only see the lacks of housework, the dinners with family dialogues

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

When you enter on his studio, it's like he can have his own personal space, to make him accomplished, while she only keep the house clean and didn't own a space to develop her interest

How would you describe the relationship between the two characters?

A very realistic stereotypical relationship, not the healthy type but the one that we can see around us

What made you think like that?

The dialogues

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

Maybe Im wrong but I remember a scene when she said that feels depressed and after that he ask if she wants to fuck. That moment remember me a a very ugly old relationship and how I feel at that time

How would you describe the relationship between the two main characters and the family visiting?

The typical family performance, when people dont say they true belives meanwhile others say too much without reason

What made you think like that?

The mother of him and his attitude.towards the protagonist

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

The dinner telling the protagonist all the housework things that remains to do. I also remember a moment when the man said.something like 'You know how she is, dont say anything'.

Did you replay the game?

Yes

How much time did you play the game?

1 hour on total?

In case that you replay the game, why did you do it?

I found this game very touching, we need more games like this and videogames are the best way to explore empathy and roleplay to understand some lives that maybe we dont live irl

Do you feel that this scenario could realistic?

Yes

Why?

Because I think that we all (on our own way) sometimes we experience those situations. Through ourselves, our family, friends, massmedia...

Participant: P19

Gender: Male

Age: 18

Played!

What would you say the game is about?

Depression, routine, emotion.

How would you describe the woman's character?

A wife that try to do the best, even if she is in depression

How do you think she is feeling?

Enclosed, less than everyone, sad, frustrated

What made you think like that?

she is traped in her routine, with a toxic relation with everyone, she can't go outside, her husband uses her for his self hapiness

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

In the end, she is so enclosed, she can't cry anymore because her "safe spaces" are with people, the house seem more and more tiny, and she break, she ruin the "masterpiece" of her husband and she is done.

How would you describe the man's character?

Toxic, empty, without realization, but successful in an society way. He is very broken inside. But he is trying his best.

What made you think like that?

He is trying to not hurt anyone, but at the same time he is hurting his wife with the comments and seeing her like a sexual object.

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

The dialogue at the end

How would you describe the relationship between the two characters?

two broken person trying their best to do the best and go forward

What made you think like that?

the man is broken and he talk about it, the girl is broken but she doesn't talk about it, but both are trying .

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

the game itself

How would you describe the relationship between the two main characters and the family visiting?

Samantha judging, victorine holding on, juan and gabriel trying to have good time

What made you think like that?

dialogues

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

-

Did you replay the game?

No

How much time did you play the game?

Don't know, 15-30 min

In case that you replay the game, why did you do it?

-

Do you feel that this scenario could realistic?

Yes

Why?

I think we are all broken inside, ones more than others, but depression come in various different ways. And we try to go forward as we can

Participant: P20

Gender: Male

Age: 29

cool

What would you say the game is about?

It's about the wife of a self absorbed artist twat and how much shit she has to take from him, and later his parents and her sister. All in a very "civil" and "cordial" manner. And how this state of things make her fall into a deep depression and anxiety. Its a great telling of how exhausting, inhexistently taking into count, and frustrating is the work of a "housewife". And how much damaging are the expectations and mixed messages of "woman realization" are when they are not honest or put into practice in real life. when they are also applied in discourse in contemporary families.

How would you describe the woman's character?

She's a humble, kind of shy, caring woman. She may endure a little bit too much veiled abuse from her family but it's not her fault in any way.

How do you think she is feeling?

she's feeling trapped, exhausted, depressed, and unrecognized.

What made you think like that?

I mean, the objective of the game is to make her pass through the day without crying of frustration and anxiety.

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

All the interactions she has with her family are of them demanding something of her or to do something better, criticizing something about how she is or what she does or if she isn't doing nothing with her life.

How would you describe the man's character?

He's a self absorbed artist twat

What made you think like that?

he only talks about himself and all he does and how her wife "isn't livieng up to her potential". He doesn't take a second to really listen to her. He talks about his peers in a very derogative and doucheuy way. Like he's some sort of touched by the hand of god fucker or something

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

how after the dinner with his parents and her sister he offers make up sex to her but it just turns out to be she blowing him dry and that's that. pretty unconsiderate if you tell me.

How would you describe the relationship between the two characters?

it's very unequal. He passes as a "good guy" who is concerned of her and what she wants but that's all bullcrap. his wishes and projects are very above of what she could want, desire, and don't give her space to figure out herself or what she wants to do with herself.

What made you think like that?

how he talks to her. starting to talk about them or her needs just to divert into talking about his needs or "suggesting" her to take care of the house or even his fucking laundry.

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

the ending is very telling. she has been going through all this shit silently but at the end of the end he's kinda making her do all this emotional labor for him and afterwards ask her sex (Y)

How would you describe the relationship between the two main characters and the family visiting?

they're very criticizing unpleasant, neurotic, and nosy parents

What made you think like that?

their interactions with them. They are supposedly going there "to help" but they just only stand there and criticize her and their relationship. Especially the mother. They seem also pretty uninterested of his work.

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

all their dinners.

Did you replay the game?

No

How much time did you play the game?

I don't know maybe an hour. Maybe a little less.

In case that you replay the game, why did you do it?

Do you feel that this scenario could realistic?

Yes

Why?

Because the game and the diallogue tap into a lot of tropes and common senses that we all been brought up with. The idea that "housewife labor" isn't work being the hardest and most damaging one.

Participant: P21

Age: 31

Gender: male

What would you say the game is about?

a blonde peruvian

How would you describe the woman's character?

a blonde peruvian

How do you think she is feeling?

concerned

What made you think like that?

her big house

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

no

How would you describe the man's character?

selfish workaholic

What made you think like that?

his short dialogue

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

no

How would you describe the relationship between the two characters?

what society expects

What made you think like that?

media

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

the goodnites

How would you describe the relationship between the two main characters and the family visiting?

What made you think like that?

-

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

-

Did you replay the game?

No

How much time did you play the game?

3 minutes

In case that you replay the game, why did you do it?

-

Do you feel that this scenario could realistic?

Yes

Why?

-

Participant: P22

Gender: Female

Age: 25

What would you say the game is about?

Id say its a game where nether party communicated properly.

How would you describe the woman's character?

Not very open.

How do you think she is feeling?

Probably depressed.

What made you think like that?

The way she acted.

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

She didn't really say properly how she felt, instead went to cry.

How would you describe the man's character?

Keeping feelings in, stressed and frustrated.

What made you think like that?

The way he spoke

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

While he tried to most likely talk tough in the beginning he started to crack slowly and open up in the end.

How would you describe the relationship between the two characters?

Not very open

What made you think like that?

They didn't express their feelings very much. For example the lady decided to hide and the man hold it in.

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

Just the connection between the characters

How would you describe the relationship between the two main characters and the family visiting?

A big mess

What made you think like that?

The way they spoke

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

Food table.

Did you replay the game?

No

How much time did you play the game?

1

In case that you replay the game, why did you do it?

-

Do you feel that this scenario could realistic?

Yes

Why?

Because people are bad at communicating. Probably one of the biggest breakup things while being an adult.

Participant :P23

Gender: Male

Age: 38

What would you say the game is about?

Being suffocated by others

How would you describe the woman's character?

Depressive tendencies

How do you think she is feeling?

Overwhelmed

What made you think like that?

Every little thing somebody said put her down

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

-

How would you describe the man's character?

Self aggrandizing to hide his insecurities

What made you think like that?

Pretty much everything he said

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

His final speech

How would you describe the relationship between the two characters?

Strained

What made you think like that?

Their personalities don't fit and that creates tension

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

-

How would you describe the relationship between the two main characters and the family visiting?

Poor

What made you think like that?

They didn't want them there

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

The mother was a constant source of discomfort

Did you replay the game?

No

How much time did you play the game?

30 minutes

In case that you replay the game, why did you do it?

-

Do you feel that this scenario could realistic?

Yes

Why?

Been there

Participant: P24

Gender: Female

Age: 28

What would you say the game is about?

About depression, oppression. How the life of this woman is affected by a horrible relationship where she is treated like a servant for his partner, family and relatives.

How would you describe the woman's character?

Submissive

How do you think she is feeling?

Horrible, depressed

What made you think like that?

Her reactions, constant crying in loneliness

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

When I was trying to interact with objects and she couldn't until she cried.

How would you describe the man's character?

Typical "I'm a good contemporary man" but really is an oppressive being.

What made you think like that?

All the passive aggressive talk over dinner where he mentions things undone around the house, or the food, or her look, or what she does; how he provides for them in a way that sounds like boasting. His over confident personality.

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

When he falls from the ladder and when she comes to his aid he is nasty and talks about his painting before worrying about himself.

How would you describe the relationship between the two characters?

Sad

What made you think like that?

It started getting uncomfortable as the 'days' passed.

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

Whenever they couldn't even say I love you to each other.

How would you describe the relationship between the two main characters and the family visiting?

Different between parents and his son and her.

What made you think like that?

They all had passive (and not so passive) aggressive comments about everything.

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

Whenever the mother muttered ANYTHING.

Did you replay the game?

No

How much time did you play the game?

25 minutes

In case that you replay the game, why did you do it?

-

Do you feel that this scenario could realistic?

Yes

Why?

It IS real, I've known people who have lived through it.

Participant: P25

Gender: Male

Age: 29

What would you say the game is about?

Depression

How would you describe the woman's character?

Submissive

How do you think she is feeling?

Depressed

What made you think like that?

She cries a lot

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

Every time she cried for doing her daily chores and for the bad treatment of her husband and family

How would you describe the man's character?

Egocentric

What made you think like that?

He was only caring about his work and desires

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

All the pillow talk

How would you describe the relationship between the two characters?

Sad

What made you think like that?

None of them were happy

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

Every interaction between them

How would you describe the relationship between the two main characters and the family visiting?

They were uncomfortable

What made you think like that?

They were complaining about having them on the house

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

When they were having dinner together

Did you replay the game?

No

How much time did you play the game?

One hour

In case that you replay the game, why did you do it?

I didn't

Do you feel that this scenario could realistic?

Yes

Why?

I suppose that when people have money and time to waste they start complaining about their daily chores, but they do not realize the type of people with whom they are related.

Participant: P26

Gender: NB

Age: 22

Done

What would you say the game is about?

Invisibility of the women behind "great" men.

How would you describe the woman's character?

Depressed, resigned to be under Gabriel.

How do you think she is feeling?

Empty, stalled in life

What made you think like that?

The constant sobbing, the inability to do more than 3 or 4 activities daily, the dizziness

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

Crying, camera movements...

How would you describe the man's character?

Egocentric, obtuse

What made you think like that?

His lack of vision regarding his wife's needs, the way he puts himself over her.

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

Constantly demanding Victorine to do things for him, especially sex

How would you describe the relationship between the two characters?

Gabriel has power over Vi, she is helpless

What made you think like that?

She complies with his needs, except for the one moment where she destroys his painting.

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

Every demand he makes, it makes the game move forward. The constant sobbing is depressing

How would you describe the relationship between the two main characters and the family visiting?

Gabriel acts protective most of the time, but leaves Vi without an opinion

What made you think like that?

He talks over her and answers for her

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

Mostly everyone talks over Vi, even her sister and niece.

Did you replay the game?

No

How much time did you play the game?

Around 20 minutes or so

In case that you replay the game, why did you do it?

I wouldn't, it lacks depth and free will. The constant sobbing, the portrayal of Vi as helpless and depressed is questionable. Even if the idea was to criticize a dynamic in society, I believe that showing a woman with almost no agency over herself may cause more harm than good. It made me feel helpless.

Do you feel that this scenario could realistic?

Yes

Why?

As I stated in the previous question, this may be a believable scenario in real life, but it is in no way a positive one. The lack of agency it gives the player made me feel enslaved to the game. In some ways it reminded me of the game Façade

FOLLOW-UP

R:

Lo primero que quería preguntarte es si tienes algún comentario extra sobre el juego que no hallaste el espacio para expresar en la encuesta. Y Segundo si en esta semana, luego de que jugaste el juego. Pensaste o conversaste sobre él en tu vida diaria?

P26:

Lo que me chocó fue la falta de agencia que tienes a través del personaje. Me tocó bastante eso, ese día y el siguiente estuve medio depre, jajaja.

No le he hablado a nadie del juego, lo sentí como una experiencia bien personal.

En un inicio creo que critiqué un poco la jugabilidad y al personaje, pero después empaticé bastante con ella.

Me dieron ganas de regresar y ayudar a que haga su vida fuera de Gabriel (ese era el nombre del esposo, no?). Por momentos me recordó a un juego de los 90, Twinsen's Odyssey, por la vista medio isometrics y los espacios vacíos fuera del campo del juego en sí. Es bien sensorial lo que han hecho, sentí que me acorralada y eso puede ser incómodo. La falta de objetivo final y la libertad de hacer lo que el esposo te diga o fumarte un pucho me encantó. Igual por momentos me dió como un impulso por tener la casa bien, como si estuviera en Sims o algo así.

Me hubiera gustado que el límite de acciones por día sea mayor, pero entiendo a qué van (creo).

Los personajes de la familia me quedaron un poco unidimensionales, sería bacán que expandan eso.

R:

Justo te iba a preguntar por la falta de agencia. Por que lo comentas en tus respuestas sobre como relacionas el juego con la vida real."The lack of agency it gives the player made me feel enslaved to the game" Podrías explicar a lo que te refieres? La relación de esclavitud al juego la vez de alguna manera reflejada en la vida real?

P26:

Creo que la esclavitud que me hizo sentir el juego –en el sentido de no tener la libertad de mandar todo a la mierda, o salir de la casa, divorciarme de Gabriel, etc.– es un reflejo de lo que la mayoría de personas siente en algún momento. Ignorando casos reales y actuales de esclavitud y trata de personas, creo que el estado mental estanco en el que alguien puede estar es un tipo de auto-esclavitud. Salir de ello requiere introspección y apoyo en otras personas. Estar subyugada a alguien y sacrificar tus propias aspiraciones casi voluntariamente es un estado mental difícil de quebrar; sobre todo porque, en el caso de Vi, garantiza que tenga una casa y dinero. Esta misma situación se puede cambiar a estar atadx a un trabajo esclavizante para subsistir, tener depresión crónica o simplemente entrar en un loop rutinario que de a pocos te aísla del resto.

Podríamos sacarle una interpretación sobre el tiempo en que estamos y la demanda de productividad, el estado de vigilancia y control constante de la tecnología y gobiernos sobre las personas, o algo por el estilo. Es flojo, pero a ese nivel puede funcionar también.

R:

Podrías expandir un poco en esta idea?

The constant sobbing, the portrayal of Vi as helpless and depressed is questionable. Even if the idea was to criticize a dynamic in society, I believe that showing a woman with almost no agency over herself may cause more harm than good. It made me feel helpless

P26:

Con esto me refería a lo que, en un primer momento, pensé sobre la representación de Vi y la responsabilidad de lxs desarrolladores sobre lo que eligen mostrar en su producto. No es que exija una responsabilidad moral por mostrar o admitir una salida verdadera al hoyo en que Victorine está; pero creo que eso podría ayudar a dar una imagen de superación o independencia mayor de la que termina por tener. Las máximas 'venganzas' que pude tener siendo Vi, fueron negarle sexo a Gabriel, fumarme un pucho y no hacer nada. Tírarle pintura a su mural y traer a mi hermana y sobrino eran situaciones que el juego mismo te daba por

default. Yo hubiera querido salir de la casa, dejar al tipo, mandar a la mierda a la mamá de Gabriel, elegir no llorar, decirle a Gabriel que él se prepare su propia comida y limpie su propio inodoro.

No obstante, el estímulo de tener el llanto al final del día, haga o no lo que se le exige a Victorine, me hacía sentir culpable y sin escapatoria. Así fume puchos y no dedique mi limitado tiempo a los quehaceres de la casa, igual terminaba en angustia y llanto. Por eso también sentía esclavitud, o a la casa como una prisión. Podía no hacer lo que se me exigía, pero igual estaba metida ahí sin escapatoria.

Con el paso de las horas y días, creo que entendí que la representación de Vi, lejos de ser cuestionable por mostrarla sin agencia sobre su propio destino, muestra una realidad jodida. Entiendo que un final feliz no tiene por qué ser un objetivo del juego, pero las ganas que tenía de ir y sacarla de su casa me fastidiaban. El hecho de que el juego le deje a lxs jugadores percepciones y reacciones como esa creo que son suficientemente potentes para denotar la postura de lxs desarrolladores.

R:

Y también me gustaría saber si tuviste alguna clase de estrategia de juego al paso de los días.

P26:

La estrategia al inicio fue ver qué tanto podía hacer en un día. Una vez que determiné que se limitaba a cuatro cosas (creo?), decidí hacer máximo 2 o 3 de las exigencias de las personas de la casa y una 'para mí'. Asimismo, le negué relaciones a Gabriel salvo el día que me defendió frente a mi madre...

Participant: P27

Gender: female

Age: 22

What would you say the game is about?

Women rights

How would you describe the woman's character?

Desperate, lonely

How do you think she is feeling?

Used, worthless

What made you think like that?

She is crying a lot

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

-

How would you describe the man's character?

Dump, he doesn't see what he's doing, selfish

What made you think like that?

He is treating her badly, asking her to do nothing but shitty jobs, still asking for sex as reward for not allowing her to do what she wants

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

-

How would you describe the relationship between the two characters?

There probably is love. But she does not talk about her issues with him and he does not see any problems

What made you think like that?

Because they talk, he is telling her that his parents hopefully leave soon to take some weight off her. He is accepting it when she declines sex

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

How would you describe the relationship between the two main characters and the family visiting?

Distant

What made you think like that?

She does not like his family, he does not like hers

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

-

Did you replay the game?

No

How much time did you play the game?

Until the end

In case that you replay the game, why did you do it?

-

Do you feel that this scenario could realistic?

Yes

Why?

People have issues to share what's on their mind. Sometimes they rather deal with themselves instead of risking a discussion. Relationships only work with mutual effort and unfortunately things like that occur often in nowadays society.

Participant: P28

Gender: male

Age: 29

What would you say the game is about?

a housewife

How would you describe the woman's character?

a housewife with depression

How do you think she is feeling?

sad, bored, dull

What made you think like that?

she performs dull tasks through the day and eventually cries

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

when she cries

How would you describe the man's character?

a self centered, unaware, sexist husband

What made you think like that?

he mostly cares about his work, keeps her as a housekeeper

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

dinner time

How would you describe the relationship between the two characters?

a dull marriage with communication problems

What made you think like that?

they aren't truly aware of each other

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

dinner time

How would you describe the relationship between the two main characters and the family visiting?

family feels intrusive

What made you think like that?

they dont really add value to the couple

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

dinner time

Did you replay the game?

No

How much time did you play the game?

about 15 minutes

In case that you replay the game, why did you do it?

-

Do you feel that this scenario could realistic?

Yes

Why?

why not? its a family like many others

Participant: P29

Gender: male

Age: 31

ok

What would you say the game is about?

depression, being the one without a job in a relationship, dependence

How would you describe the woman's character?

depressive, confined

How do you think she is feeling?

sad, repressed

What made you think like that?

most of her actions are household chores, mundane in contrast of the male artist character

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

they're talking about her cooking sandwiches while he's concentrated on how best to work on his painting

How would you describe the man's character?

aloof, self-centered

What made you think like that?

ins't connected to female character's experience or feelings

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

sandwich conversation. lack of empathy

How would you describe the relationship between the two characters?

codependent

What made you think like that?

they both leech off each other sort of.

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

'you're my muse'

How would you describe the relationship between the two main characters and the family visiting?

i didn't get to the family visiting. game glitched out after stairs incident.

What made you think like that?

?

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

?

Did you replay the game?

No

How much time did you play the game?

until stairs incident. then game glitched out (female character warped outside the room space and colided on the walls so couldn't float back in)

In case that you replay the game, why did you do it?

-

Do you feel that this scenario could realistic?

Yes

Why?

seems like one of those really serious plays about contemporary life. yikes!

Participant: P30

Gender: Male

Age: 26

What would you say the game is about?

overcoming depression

How would you describe the woman's character?

obliging

How do you think she is feeling?

depressed

What made you think like that?

the mellow repetitive music, the "camera" effects and color changes as the woman walks around the apartment doing menial tasks and not being able to participate creatively

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

the random crying after a few minutes

How would you describe the man's character?

complacent, oblivious to his wife's feelings

What made you think like that?

the way he speaks and "casually" asks for house tasks to be done by her

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

accusing her of being privileged and not being able to engage creatively in a project

How would you describe the relationship between the two characters?

typical

What made you think like that?

the man engages in his passion/work, the woman does all housekeeping

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

every day was the same

How would you describe the relationship between the two main characters and the family visiting?

didn't get to that part, the game crashed (the woman was walking midair outside the apartment)

What made you think like that?

-

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

-

Did you replay the game?

Yes

How much time did you play the game?

about 5 min both times, had problems

In case that you replay the game, why did you do it?

wanted to see how scripted was it

Do you feel that this scenario could realistic?

Yes

Why?

-

Participant: P31

Age: 34

Gender: female

What would you say the game is about?

a housewife's life

How would you describe the woman's character?

sad

How do you think she is feeling?

anxiety

What made you think like that?

her life, actions...

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

31/5000 interacting with his parents-in-law

How would you describe the man's character?

egoista

What made you think like that?

his purpose

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

his illness

How would you describe the relationship between the two characters?

interests relationship

What made you think like that?

his actions

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

all

How would you describe the relationship between the two main characters and the family visiting?

same as previous answer

What made you think like that?

same as previous answer

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

same as previous answer

Did you replay the game?

No

How much time did you play the game?

don't know

In case that you replay the game, why did you do it?

cuz I liked it, to complete it

Do you feel that this scenario could realistic?

Yes

Why?

It happens

Participant: P32

Gender: Male

Age: 28

What would you say the game is about?

Gender roles.

How would you describe the woman's character?

In a way she is a little bit compliant.

How do you think she is feeling?

I think she is hiding how she really feels.

What made you think like that?

Well, in the game she is only interacting with her partner in a responsive way, which means she is not expressing herself but rather just responding to her partner inputs.

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

The dinner time.

How would you describe the man's character?

Passive aggressive.

What made you think like that?

The way he say things. He is constantly reproaching her in a subtle manner, often joking or laughing after he complains about something.

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

Dinner time.

How would you describe the relationship between the two characters?

It's an unequal relationship, in which he is empowered and she isn't.

What made you think like that?

First is the way they talk, but more profoundly is the roles they are taking in their relationship. He is the provider of the home and the one who settles the rules and values around, while she is just the partner that has to agree with everything and help him being a better provider.

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

Dinner and bed time.

How would you describe the relationship between the two main characters and the family visiting?

-

What made you think like that?

-

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

-

Did you replay the game?

No

How much time did you play the game?

Around 15 minutes.

In case that you replay the game, why did you do it?

-

Do you feel that this scenario could realistic?

Yes

Why?

It is a realistic relationship pretty much around the world.

Participant: P33

Gender: M

Age: 30

What would you say the game is about?

Gender roles, chauvinism, cotidianity.

How would you describe the woman's character?

Submitted

How do you think she is feeling?

Depressed

What made you think like that?

There's nothing exciting happening in her life, she has no motivations and she cries frequently.

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

-

How would you describe the man's character?

Male chauvinist, selfish, inconsiderate

What made you think like that?

He doesn't care about her interests or feelings, he only cares about his projects and goals.

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

-

How would you describe the relationship between the two characters?

Worn, routine

What made you think like that?

-

Is there any moment in the game that you remember the most, that could be used as an example for your description?

-

How would you describe the relationship between the two main characters and the family visiting?

