

REPORT

**SERIOUS GAMES FOR HEALTH. IMPROVE YOUR HEALTH
PLAYING****Yuri Quintana and Óscar García**
Editorial Gedisa, Madrid, 2017**Graciela Padilla Castillo:** Complutense University of Madrid. Spain
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We are faced with a necessary, original and super interesting work that explains and applies the trinomial communication-health-videogames. Its authors are: Yuri Quintana, director of Global Health Informatics at the Beth Israel Deaconess medical center and assistant professor of Medicine at Harvard; and Óscar García, Academic Director of the first Degree in Videogames and Applied Games of Barcelona (ENTI-UB) and Silver Award in the Cure4Kids Global eHealth Challenge.

The content of the text is the result of the celebration of the first Serious Games for Health course taught in Spain in April 2016, in the city of Barcelona. It is an academic initiative of the School of New Interactive Technologies (ENTI-UB) center attached to the University of Barcelona, Harvard Medical School and Division of Clinical Informatics at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center. Now, thanks to the publication of the book, by Gedisa Editorial, any academic, professional or student of communication-health-videogames, can go into the games applied in health, thanks to this interesting and novel reading.

Throughout six chapters, which the authors call "capsules", we go through the importance of games, health trends and their connection with games, the typologies and problems of games applied to health, the impact of games applied, and the games market with a decalogue of recommendations. Those who are not experts in the field can find suggestive definitions in the first episode: "Through serious games for health we not only want to increase knowledge, but also to make a behavior change sustained over time" (page 13). Then, the two experts qualify: "They are called serious because they must have goals to achieve: educate and motivate. They should cause changes in knowledge and attitude, but also behavior (e.g. weight loss, quitting smoking)" (page 14).

The second chapter addresses the experience and work of Jesse Schell: "He is an American video game designer, author, executive director of Schell Games and a distinguished professor of the practical subject of Entertainment Technology at the Entertainment Technology Center (ETC). from Carnegie Mellon University (CMU). Schell says that when we play, like when we work, we solve challenges. Therefore, it is an activity with a very clear competence load, but it is important to remember that

we do it from a radically different perspective: we do it from a playful attitude!" (Page 20).

According to this, Quintana and García give the essence of their book and the importance of these serious games that they propose for health: "A good game applied to health must: 1) Encourage the user to acquire new knowledge about a specific issue related to this field. For this, it is important to define what our audience is and their degree of health knowledge. Therefore, it is necessary to have an educator in the group. 2) Provoke positive changes in their behavior that improve health. For example, in nutritional games you have to combine games on the computer and games in the physical environment "(page 28).

Another essential part of the compendium is found in the fifth capsule or chapter, where the authors focus on the current major health problems: the aging of the population, spending on care tasks, number of chronic patients, alcohol, glucose, cholesterol, sedentary lifestyle, smoking, overweight, unhealthy diets ... Games and applications can prevent and reduce deaths and diseases that are a consequence of these ailments and circumstances of the XXI century. Also, to validate these ideas, they cite the Hungarian psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, who has worked on the relationship between creativity and human happiness, as a professor of psychology at the University of Claremont (California).

For all the above, we can indicate that we are dealing with a text that proposes a multitude of multidisciplinary research paths; presents cases of success of games in health, worthy of study; and leaves interesting research perspectives, showing that games and video games are, really, a serious thing, that can help the sick, relatives of the sick, and any citizen who can get sick, for the ailments of the developed world of the 21st century: alcohol, glucose, cholesterol, sedentary lifestyle, smoking, overweight, unhealthy diets, which, ultimately, cause deaths and diseases that could be prevented.

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