

Utopia, a perfect world...

By Laura van der Lubbe

Perfection is something that is hard to achieve. If I would give my own reflection on the perfect world this would make other people worse off. Not because I intend to harm them, but because I will most probably choose for perfection in a different, egocentric, way. Simply because I am human.

Another thing that makes Utopia a complex concept is that we can try to perfect the world, for example by trying to achieve world peace, but perfecting the world does not mean perfecting life. There are so many things I don't believe we can fix, like the unfair death (by disease, accident or bad luck) of those who were "too young to die". Are we ever going to be capable of fixing this? And what is the point of perfecting the world, if life isn't perfect? And do we even want to live a perfect life in a perfect world? You can already sense that I am a Utopia-skeptic. I think that perfection is boring.

However there is something that I believe will change both our lives and our world for the better. It is (not surprisingly for those who know me) education. I will not give a lecture on how everybody on this earth (and all the other 'earths' that might exist) should be able to follow education. My Utopia starts with changing education (that's why you may also call it 'the ideal education situation'), in order to let the pure value of education shine. Of course, in some countries there are more urgent things that need to be fixed, but as I am not into politics I don't feel the urge to talk about these things.

As kids we go to schools because we have to. Some of us like it, some don't. Some schools do their best to make something of the education they are offering, some don't. Enthusiasm has a serious impact on motivation. As a teacher shows enthusiasm, which can be expressed in many different ways, this influences the students. Different teachers have different effects on students. A teacher that is enthusiastic about his work is also a teacher that discovers what students are good at. It is really important that teachers help students to find their true passion, as this is a really difficult thing to find. No matter what your level is, when you find something you are passionate about you will be able to pursue your dreams. This will lead to less unhappy people, unhappy because they cannot fill in their life in a meaningful way, which will lead to a more happy society.

My education Utopia is not so much about changing the education system, but changing the attitudes around it. If we would approach it in a more positive way, instead of something you **have** to do. If teachers would be enthusiastic, passionate people, believing that there is a talent in each student... If in Utopia things like workload, pressure, bad working conditions and bad teachers would not exist... Education would become something to develop yourself, because you're encouraged to. In the end, if we find something we get gratification from, we will become happier. And in the end, isn't happiness what it is all about?

How can serious games contribute to this? Serious games can teach students without them noticing they are being taught. Since there are always things that you don't like being taught serious games can help to teach you those things. Serious games can also help teachers to develop themselves. Think of training games that challenge them to teach a completely unmotivated group of students. Serious gaming can also contribute to 'a lifelong learning' as it makes it easier to learn wherever you want, whenever you want, and whatever you want to learn.

p.s. I also think that in Utopia there are **no more** genderbiases.