

Epistemic Disobedience in Digital Games: *Mega Man X8 16-bit* case

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ABSTRACT

This article examines how game mods and fangames can operate as practices of epistemic disobedience within a global gaming industry marked by coloniality and technological precarity. Drawing on the Brazilian history of cloning, piracy, and *gambiarra*, it argues that fan productions challenge hegemonic definitions of what counts as a “good” game and who is entitled to create it. The article distinguishes technical and affective dimensions of modding, emphasizing how communities mobilize precarious infrastructures, shared knowledge, and emotional attachments to reconfigure commercial franchises. Through a case study of the fangame *Mega Man X8 16-bit* and forty reviews posted on Sonic Fan Games HQ, it analyzes how players evaluate the project against Capcom’s original title, revealing tensions between fandom, market expectations, and portfolio-building hope labor. The article concludes that mods and fangames, especially in the Global South, transform material limitations into alternative ways of knowing, designing, inhabiting, and playing digital games today.

Keywords

Epistemic disobedience, game mods, coloniality, affective communities, alternative knowledge

INTRODUCTION

Technology is a form of political domination, considering that it presupposes several barriers to access to the production and use of technological devices. These barriers serve to ensure the political divisions established after the end of World War II, to maintain the countries of the north with their hegemony over the world. This pattern was also shown with the rise of the digital game industry, especially regarding home consoles in the second half of the twentieth century. When video games were inserted into everyday life in the 1970s with the games *Computer Space*, in 1971, and *PONG* in 1972, the divisions and access to technologies that already existed in the

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world were transported to this new media, which gained a lot of traction in the United States and, later, in Japan (Luz, 2010). However, when we think about the Brazilian context, development did not follow the same molds as the Japanese and American industries.

The arrival of games in Brazil was determined by the Market Reserve Policy instituted during the 1980s by Law No. 7,232, of October 29, 1984, known as the National Information Technology Policy, which essentially closed the country to the import of technological products developed in the Global North. The goal of this law is to “to develop national capacity in informatics activities, for the benefit of the social, cultural, political, technological and economic development of Brazilian society” (Brazil, 1984). According to Ferreira (2020), this law made it difficult for professionals and researchers to access technologies that were being developed in the world. Due to the limitations imposed by the National Information Technology Policy, several Brazilian companies have invested in the cloning of consoles and personal computers in the national territory; These state policies prevented access to imported technological products, making piracy and the adaptation of these technologies by companies and consumers crucial to the development of the video game industry and to the formulation of Brazilian gamer culture during the 1980s.

At first, this nascent industry in Brazil will be shaped by the logic of the *gambiarra*, that is a factor for understanding the socio-technical constitution of digital culture, adapting technical protocols when dealing with specific problems, prioritizing the practicality and lower cost of tools already available or developed locally (Messias and Mussa, 2020; Castanheira e Silva, 2025).

Alongside the *gambiarras*, we also see issues with piracy to access the technologies that have been used in Brazil since the 1980s, when it was not possible to access technological products as exposed. Thus, several Brazilian companies invested in the so-called "clones" of consoles and personal computers in Brazilian territory, appropriating the technology and adapting it to the national market (Ferreira, 2020; Oliveira, Ferreira, Boechat and Carvalho, 2014).

These piracy movements, which serve as a way to access technology, were not confined to past decades or are a reality only in Brazil; they are still used to circumvent practices considered abusive, such as *Digital Rights Management (DRM)*¹

software that affect the way players can enjoy their products, with a series of barriers imposed by companies that can even prevent a game from being used if there is no connection with the internet.

With the above, we observe that there is already an appreciation for techniques that are contrary to the domination of the big players in the game industry, even if this implies the use of illegal techniques such as piracy. Another issue that we see and that also goes beyond the limits of legality are modifications, or just *mods*. Modification is part of human existence and its relationship with technology, since the moment that humanity created tools that expanded its capabilities and served to streamline daily tasks and work (Kirkwood and Weatherby, 2018). Because of the modification we were able to expand its capabilities using technical artifacts, changing the relationship with them and discovering new possibilities of interaction with objects and, consequently, with the world. With the rise of digital technologies, this relationship has been maintained. Mods *can* then be understood as this dimension of exploring the limits of machines and games, to modify specific issues in the games, such as user interface changes, translations into local languages, adjustments to textures, or even completely redo the experience, changing the way of playing itself. The community of modders, as game modifiers are called, is fruitful and explores the barriers that commercial games cannot explore due to the need for financial return, which often makes the industry bet on formulaic and widely tested works. The history of video games itself is based on the existence of modder culture and the sharing of information, before the creation of the industry itself. This culture is much closer to play as a free activity, according to Huizinga (2019). Christiansen (2012) already pointed out this issue with the game *Spacewar!*, produced by MIT students in 1961:

The final version of *Spacewar!* was the product of a group effort by a team of hackers, each one working without pay to make his or her contribution to the final game. *Spacewar!* was not just the first computer game, it was also the first game to be modded. (Christiansen, 2012, p. 32)

Within the issue of game modifications, we can also find fangames, a category that has similarities with modifications, but the differences are significant, which ends up putting fangames in their own category.

Observing in this way, Mods and Fangames are placed as categories that, to some extent, go against the canons imposed by the big companies in the gaming

industry. They seek to create new experiences, using the industry's own weapons: as a mod makes changes to the base game to twist and create a new idea, fangames start from scratch, creating new stories for established franchises, such as the franchise *Mega Man* from Japanese developer Capcom. But they can also be seen as ways of creating portfolios for designers; a way of exposing their work to the digital games industry, thus configuring themselves as a way of *hope labor*, i.e., work performed in the present with little or no pay, in which the worker expects that future employment opportunities may arise through this exposure to the labor market (Kuehn and Corrigan, 2013).

In this way, mods and fangames can be observed from two different perspectives: as a form of appropriation and creation of something new and unique that is of interest to the community or as a form of hope labor. This article aims to investigate the first perspective: it is possible that *mods* and fangames can be considered forms of epistemic disobedience? This is because, when created and distributed by fans, they appropriate the original game to generate new configurations and distributions. Such appropriations often give voice to the community's issues and meet their desires, distancing themselves from purely market interests.

To try to discuss the issue, the text is divided into two sections that organize its work methodology. In the first part, "Mod and fangames: epistemic disobedience?" we discussed, in the light of literature, what epistemic disobedience is, how it is placed, and whether the practice of modifying and creating fan content can be considered a way to place oneself in an opposite position to the contemporary game industry. In the second part, "The issue of mods and fangames in *Mega Man X8 16-bit*", we analyze the reception of players on the Sonic Fan Games HQ website, who also assume the role of critics, regarding the reception of the game *Mega Man X8 16-bit* made by Brazilian modder Alysson da Paz and made available for free through the same site. The game, made by the Brazilian designer alone, reimagines the 2004 original with the 16-bit gaming aesthetic of the Super Nintendo console, released in 1990. The success of the fangame combined with the fact that the last game in the *Mega Man X* franchise was *X8* in 2004 motivated the interest in analyzing the reception within the community.

The analysis of the reception was based on the 39 reviews published on the game's website. These criticisms reveal the players' relationships with the original work, with the new version, with the company that produces the *Mega Man* franchise and among the players themselves. Due to the number of critiques on the site, all were analyzed, seeking to understand how they are divided into the affective and technical categories of creating mods and fangames. For the purposes of this article, four critiques were selected since they convey the different overall opinions given at Sonic Fans HQ.

Through the literature review, we seek to reflect on the extent to which mods and fangames can be considered as a form of epistemic disobedience, seeking to work on the concepts of identity in politics (Mignolo, 2008), epistemicide (Félix; Gomane, 2023) and *gambiarra* (Messias; Mussa, 2020) (Castanheira; Silva, 2025). From these reflections on epistemic disobedience applied to mods and fangames, we then turn our attention to the critiques that players made on the Sonic Fan Games HQ website and how players relate to *Mega Man X8*, *Mega Man X8 16-bit* and Capcom itself.

MOD AND FANGAMES: EPISTEMIC DISOBEDIENCE?

Mods and Fangames share the same essence of being fan productions, on intellectual properties already established in the video game industry. Although they start from the same trunk, they are constituted in different ways.

A mod uses an established game as a base to modifications that do not completely alter the game experience. According to Oliveira, Ferreira, Boechat and Carvalho (2014) "In our understanding, the act of making mods is a practice that alters some game elements, and it comprises including something new in its structure or mechanics (add-ons), improving the game aesthetics, or even including new game levels and game contents". In this sense, a mod operates in the so called "vanilla" version of the game, i.e. the game version that came from the original studio, with games being added different elements to customize the experience in some way but not fundamentally changing the original experience. According to the Steamworks Documentation (2025) provided by Valve Corporation "A mod, which comes from the term modification, refers to an alteration or creation of files in a game to change aspects such as gameplay, graphics, environments, models, etc.".

Fangames, on the other hand, build a game from scratch, using solidified IPs like Mario, Sonic, Mega Man and many other using game engines, which provide the bases for the creation of a game. Through the engine it is possible to edit the levels, their physics, their interactions, and a myriad of other game elements. In other words, a fangame is a completely new game using a commonly known character in the industry.

This shows us one of the dimensions of modding and fangame creation that concerns the *technique* for producing a game: here, content producers (who simultaneously assume the role of producers and players) need access to hardware and software that can run mod creation programs, in addition to having technical knowledge to use game creation programs.

In a world where access to technological products is purposely expensive, a barrier of precariousness is created arising from the material possibility of acquiring goods, which must be overcome by designers of mods and fangames to launch their creations. This precariousness of access to infrastructure, education, and culture is conditioned by market demands and defined geographically, locally, and politically (Messias, Amaral, and Oliveira, 2019). The *technical dimension* is, therefore, also a market barrier to the production of mods. Modders/designers need to know how to work with these precarious resources to create a game. We can even think of a precariousness within the technical dimension: the modder does not have a robust team or financial resources to execute its vision for what the mod may become as a final product. Resources are limited and need to be optimized to create a viable product. To this end, the modders need to exhaust the game, to know its resources, its functioning, to be able to understand its techniques and "twist them". This need to exhaust the game, to "twist" its techniques and exploit to the maximum a hardware or software that is often outdated, brings the practice closer to the modder of an epistemology of *gambiarra*; Knowledge is being able to find cracks in the program, to reconfigure interfaces, to reuse "obsolete" resources. Epistemic disobedience occurs not only in the choice of themes or narratives, but in the very way of operating technically in precarious conditions. According to Flusser (2013), the device (here we can understand the game as a device) should be understood more as a toy than as an instrument in the traditional sense. In this context, the man who uses it does not act as a worker (*homo faber*), but as a player (*homo ludens*), who does not simply play

with the device, but against it, seeking to exploit its program to the maximum and understand its tricks.

Mods and fangames usually have no cost for their distribution, being made available for free online to the community of a game. Many developers include support for in-game modifications, which allows players to explore creative possibilities and companies to appropriate fan creations in yet another instance that aims at profit (Cristiansen, 2012). Thus, players who identify with certain games, building affective relationships with these intellectual properties can explore possibilities of creation with those characters and universes. This implies a second dimension to the creation of mods: an *affective dimension*.

This second dimension with the mod is the result of the modder's relationship with intellectual property modified: how important that intellectual property is for the formation of the person's identity as a gamer, and consequently, the formation of the person's political identity.

As Messias, Amaral and Oliveira (2019) point out, the modder community also creates affective spaces by reconfiguring the practices established in the industry. These practices shed light on the affective dimension that mods have, as they concern how individuals come together and create communities for the exchange of knowledge. In addition to the affection that they have for the base game, these communities build affective identities around these games. These individuals create bonds that go beyond commercial ties, establishing spaces where affective, commercial, and technological-aesthetic innovations arise (Messias, Amaral, and Oliveira, 2019). In some way, these communities also create "identities in politics, revealing the identity hidden under pretensions of universal democratic theories" (Mignolo, 2008), theories that here place market demands as if they were the demands of the players themselves, which do not always correspond to reality. In this sense, creating and playing digital games involves combining technical, communicational, and affective creativity to generate new virtualized forms of subjectivity, reinforcing the hybrid and innovative character of these practices. These practices go against the canon, putting players at the center of the game experience: for the mod experience matters what the player and the community want. The canon is determined by the epistemic normativity of the game industry, demonstrating that the *knowledge* (in this case, the monopoly of the creation of the game) "It also works

as a mastery tool, where the *power* exercise restrictions or privileged access in the organizations of colonized societies, controlling the possibility of *being* [...]" (Félix and Gomane, 2023, p. 148). Mods can offer the player the possibility of engaging in a certain epistemic disobedience through the game, taking for himself, and consequently for the entire community where he is inserted, the control of production and online distribution of the mods and fangames.

It is important to note, however, that mods should not only be understood as an idyllic form of *experimentation of the game* and *with the game*. They are also, to some extent, a form of portfolio creation for the designer. While it carries an affective dimension with intellectual property and with the community around the game, the mod is also a form of self-insertion in a competitive industry, seeking placements in the companies that make up this industry.

Thus, mods and the fangames are established, simultaneously as a form of epistemic disobedience and as a form of hope labor. As tools of creating a portfolio, they are a form of hope labor. The use of fangames as tools of hope labor is in line with capitalist practices, in the sense that designers are trying to insert themselves into the industry; In this case, we do not understand the framing as a form of epistemic disobedience, but rather of conformity with the scenario.

As they go against what is hegemonic in the industry, making counterculture movements, appropriating the canon that is governed by capitalist logics to create a new product, often the result of collective work, as in the previously mentioned case of *Spacewar!*, they are a form of epistemic disobedience. This creates means for the emancipation of the colonized using the very tools created by the hegemonic power (Damasceno; Neto, 2022).

Hegemonic power builds an identity of the "ideal" gamer that is well directed, according to Christiansen (2012). He is a young white, middle-class man. This denies the existence of other gamers, who want to share this form of media. The technological barrier to accessing games, whether in terms of simply enjoying them or producing them, reveals the colonial nature of how the industry is organized: the goal is to maximize profits, regardless of how the game is produced. The risks should always be minimal, and the return should always be maximum, even if it means alienating a significant portion of the players or those interested.

Thus, epistemic disobedience emerges as a fundamental path to challenge and reconfigure the narratives and practices imposed by the hegemony of the gaming industry. Mignolo (2008) argues that epistemic disobedience implies a detachment from the links between rationality/modernity and coloniality, seeking a "geopolitical and state politics of people, languages, religions, political and economic concepts, subjectivities, etc., that have been racialized" (Mignolo, 2008). In this sense, by denying political and epistemic agency to groups considered "inferior" by the "imperial identity politics", the industry creates the conditions for practices such as mods, fangames, and piracy to be established as acts of affirmation of other cosmologies and forms of knowledge.

Based on the reflections of Félix and Gomane (2023), we understand this construction of the "ideal gamer" as an effect of an epistemic norm: a set of criteria that defines which experiences, bodies, and knowledge count as legitimate when talking about games. Everything that escapes this pattern, such as other trajectories of access, other regimes of taste or even other ways of playing, is systematically silenced or treated as deviation, in what the authors call epistemicide, that is, the destruction or delegitimization of ways of knowing and narrating the world that are not aligned with the dominant rationality of the North.

What is done by the *modder* community is not only an opposition to the industry, but an appropriation of the very canons established by it, in order to reinterpret and create new products that are what the community members wants, where fan communities, instead of passively accepting the identity of the "ideal gamer", create and distribute content that reflects their own experiences and desires. This characteristic is manifested in the ability to develop "different epistemes based on traditional metaphysical categories of their localities" (Yuk Hui, *apud* Messias and Mussa, 2020), as opposed to the universalizing model of the North. In this sense, when Mignolo (2008) speaks of "identity in politics", he does not refer to previously given identities that later enter the political dispute, but to subjects who recognize themselves as inferior by hegemonic discourses and, from this position, produce theory and action. In games, this appears when communities of fans who don't match the "ideal gamer" organize practices like *mods* and *fan games*, redefining what counts as a game as legitimate fun, and who can speak up.

The history of video games in Brazil in the 1980s, with the proliferation of cloning and piracy practices, driven by the Market Reserve policy, offers a paradigmatic example of this epistemic disobedience. As Ferreira (2020) points out, these "subversive actions" were decisive for the country to enter the gaming market, demonstrating an *ethos* of 'being Brazilian' that, in the face of difficulties, does not hesitate to seek alternative and creative solutions. Such "*gambiarras* and appropriations", according to the perspective of Messias and Mussa (2020), can be understood as an epistemology that emerges from precariousness, transforming the absence of resources and the need for improvisation into a way of knowing and producing. Thus, *mods* and *fangames* are not just technical adaptations, but cultural movements that seek the emancipation of the "colonized", creating new worlds and new ways of inhabiting, thinking and altering these worlds, detaching themselves from capitalist logics and hegemonic narratives.

Applied to digital games, this disobedience implies displacing the epistemic monopoly of the industry: when a Brazilian fan recreates *Mega Man X8* as a 16-bit demake, redoing entire levels that were considered bad by the community, he is not only "honoring" a franchise, but reappropriating the very criteria of value — what a good *Mega Man* is, for whom it exists, which affections it should mobilize — Not from corporate interests, but from the affections that shape the game community itself.

THE ISSUE OF MODS AND FANGAMES IN MEGA MAN X8 16-BIT

From the perspectives discussed in the previous sections, we now turn our attention to *Mega Man X8 16-bit*, which is based on the PlayStation 2 game *Mega Man X8* (Capcom, 2004) that merges the *mod* and *the fangame*.

Mega Man X8 16-bit is a *demake*, a specific category of *fangames* that seeks to remake contemporary games using aesthetics and mechanics from old games. In this specific case, recreating the art style of the 16-bit era, associated with the fourth generation Super Nintendo and Mega Drive consoles that were in force from 1987 to 1996. In the case of *Mega Man X8 16-bit*, it is based on the 2004 game, published by Japanese Capcom, for the PlayStation 2 console of the sixth generation of consoles.

The *Mega Man* franchise had its first game published in 1987 for the Nintendo Entertainment System (NES) console. Over the years it has spawned *spin-offs* such as the *Mega Man X* series. It is considered a consensus among the community of the *X*

series that the quality of the titles released were dropping, until *Mega Man X7* (Capcom, 2003) which is considered the lowest point of the franchise. When the 8th instalment in the series came out, it achieved better sales results and some critical and public success, but still far from the success of yesteryear.

For the purposes of analysis, the 40 critiques of *Mega Man X8 16-bit* available on the Sonic Fan Games HQ website until November 20, 2025 were read and categorized in the two dimensions about mods and fangames previously described: technique (analyses that focus on game performance issues, which operating systems it runs on, how levels are built, among other issues involving gameplay) and; affective (players who evoke feelings during the game experience; how they feel, what emotions are triggered with the soundtrack, levels, *Sprites*, etc).

From the critiques available, four were separated that exemplify issues that were addressed in this article, so that it is possible to develop the questions posed in the text. Although they vary in size, they all exemplify in some way the technical and affective categories proposed for the creation of the *mod*, as well as on some level reveal the feelings of the gaming community towards the gaming industry and Capcom itself. Not every critique was used in the construction of this text, because some were questions about the game itself and didn't offer any insights relevant to this article.

Although they are placed as distinct categories, it is important to clarify that they are not mutually exclusive and can coexist simultaneously in the same analysis space, since the player can have several aesthetic experiences while playing, influencing their technical perception and their affective perception of the game.

It was also chosen to analyze the reviews on the site as reviewers can provide star-based ratings from 1 to 5, which assigns a quantitative dimension to the thinking of *Mega Man X8 16-bit* players.

The choice of the game's reviews was made to analyze how players position themselves in relation to Capcom, the gaming industry, and the *Mega Man* franchise. It is also interesting to note how the game reviews on the site are placed; Even when the criticisms are harsher in relation to the game, they are made to contribute to future work, indicating paths and issues that players (here in the place of critics) have noticed throughout the game. This form of feedback is very reminiscent of what we

saw at the beginning of the games, when they were made by nerds and activists, who, even working for US military projects, propagated anti-war messages in the 1960s (Witthford and Peuter, 2009).

When analyzing what players think about *Mega Man X8 16-bit*, it is possible to see that the average star rating of the 40 reviews is 4.33 stars, with the lowest rating being 3 stars. In a purely quantitative analysis, this average evaluation reveals that the game is well accepted by the community and considered a good game.

Some criticisms point to the quality of the *fangame* and how the quality achieved is something that Capcom itself cannot achieve with the franchise, such as the review made by the player "shzamm00" in September 2024:

"Brother, you've done something that not even Capcom and many other fangames have been able to do. Pure fun. The X is even more fluid in this game than it is on the SNES. 5 stars, I love the bosses, especially Serenade and Red, they are perfect."

By stating that the fangame delivers something that not even Capcom itself can produce, the player takes away from the company a certain authority over what "a good *Mega Man*" is, as pointed earlier: this authority leaves the company that owns the intellectual property and passes to the fans, who claim the criterion of quality and authenticity, operating a rupture with the epistemic norm of the industry.

The lowest rating was made by the player "WilliamTael" in October 2024, where the player highlights the technical aspects of the game, understanding the flaws of the original:

"I confess that I was very excited about this demake, because I liked the original Mega Man X8, even though it has severe problems, but I ended up being very disappointed with this demake while playing it.

The gameplay is not as agile and fluid as the X8, it is more similar to the X1. The level design of the Trilobite stage is worse than the original and full of annoying enemies to eat up time from a tiny stage. Zero's absence is not acceptable, as he is the character with the most interesting weapons and unsurpassed visuals (Axl doesn't miss me much).

Some stages are better than their original versions (yes, these are the terrible stages you already knew), the widescreen is something wonderful, of course, the original music and sound effects are great, the addition of new elements to the original stages is welcome, but overall the feeling is that I'm playing an incomplete demo and that it lacks the strengths of the original.

Don't get me wrong, I know that the graphics of the original X8 are pretty ugly, that the design of the armor is very bad and that certain stages are complete crap, but if it's to lose the main strengths of the original, only to have a 2D version with SNES graphics and gameplay adapted to the X1, it's better to play the original X8 and X1 separately, as X1 has beautiful stages, albeit with slower gameplay, while X8 has uglier stages, but with gameplay that surpassed all previous ones in the X franchise.”² (Our translation)

The player gave 3 stars in its review, indicating that he considered the game good, despite the issues that were pointed out throughout the analysis. In the case of "WilliamTael", we noticed that he does not consider the demake as a better game like other participants on the site. His review reveals a clear preference for the original product, in contrast to most players, who show favor of the demake. From this, we can conclude that there is no consensus among players about what constitutes a "good *Mega Man*", and this meaning is the object of dispute within the community.

A third critique that we would like to highlight comes from the user "OrstedFrowning", made in March 2025. In it, the player directly touches on the affective dimension of the mod, especially regarding a sense of nostalgia generated by the game:

“This demake is so impressive and genuinely fun, it made me realize that I didn't get over my love of gaming at the age of 30. I can't believe it took me more than six months to discover it, but I'm very glad I did. Thank you for creating such an unbelievably fantastic reimagining!”

The player's nostalgia for the game directly affects the player's own identity when he claims to realize that he has not overcome his love for games even as an

adult. In this case, the formation of the player's identity is directly shaped by the games of the 1990s

The last highlight among the criticisms we would like to give was made by the user "kainminter" in September 2024:

"Ridiculously well done.

I wish Capcom would hire this guy to direct MMX9."

This criticism summarizes one of the main issues of players with the company: the eagerness for a new game in the franchise exists among the community of players, who end up resorting to the mods and fangames to have their wishes fulfilled. This constitutes epistemic disobedience, with the community coming together to create their stories, even if on some level it also serves as a search for placements within the industry by designers. Through the commentary provided by kainminter we can see how the mechanics of hope labor mentioned earlier in this paper comes to mind. Here is in the form a player commentary but it echoes some sort of conformity to the industry so that the designer of *X8 16-bit* should be absorbed by Capcom to create the next installment of the Mega Man X franchise.

By stating that "an economy oriented towards the reproduction of life and the well-being of the many incorporates a politics of representation in which power is in the community and not in the State or in any other equivalent administrative institution", Mignolo (2008, p. 298) shifts the axis from authority to the collective. Articulating this perspective to the case of *Mega Man X8 16-bit*, we perceive, in the analyzed reviews, a community appropriation of the game that translates into epistemic disobedience in relation to the company. Even if not consciously formulated as such with these exact words, the role of players in the organization of affective communities around games from large corporations, mods and fangames implies the construction of their own identities and knowledge that confront the hegemonic model of the game industry.

CONCLUSION

Mods and fangames have been present in the gaming industry since its inception and have adapted according to the movements of the industry, always being appropriated by players. As the industry became more complex and turned to market

interests, players were creating their own ways of seeing the games they wanted on screen. In this sense, mods and fangames as forms of epistemic disobedience, to the extent that the player/game designer takes over the production of the games they want to see on screen. but they should also be seen as processes of integration. This type of game can be used as a process for creating designers' portfolios, for later assimilation by the industry that at first were on the margins.

Looking at *Mega Man X8 16-bit*, we can see in the reception of players/critics that fan creations have a large space in the community surrounding the *Mega Man* franchise. This reflects the mod community, which offers new experiences for players since the early days of video games, going against the industry which often does not devote so much attention to players, opting instead to make investments in tested formulas with guaranteed financial return.

But even with this collaborative aspect, it's important to highlight that there's also the challenge of trying to enter an industry, a process that can be a significant challenge for young designers.

Crucially, the issue of mods and fangames should be examined not from an idealized perspective on this type of production, but rather through the potentialities and dichotomies present within creation, as exposed in this article. If we consider the Brazilian history of cloning and piracy, the technical *gambiarras* that sustain access to consoles and the structural precariousness of creative work, mods and fangames such as *Mega Man X8 16-bit* are not only expressions of fandom, but part of a long tradition of epistemic disobedience in the Global South, in which subordinates subjects transform material limitations into their own ways of knowing and creating games.

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ENDNOTES

¹ <https://www.gog.com/blog/what-exactly-is-drm-in-video-games-and-why-should-you-care/>

² All the reviews used are available at <https://sonicfangameshq.com/forums/showcase/mega-man-x8-16-bit.2184/reviews>