Literature Review

ESA Statistics

The Entertainment Software Association (ESA) annually performs a study similar to my own. They do not go into the details of why certain groups play certain games, but they do discover many in depth descriptive statistics of the gaming population. Their study shows that 58% of Americans play video games with over 50% of households having at least one game console. 32% of the gaming population is younger than 18 years old. 32% is between the ages of 18 and 35. The remaining 36% is 36 or older. Genders are split 55% male and 45% female. The industry has grown I dollar sales over the years. 2002 had a revenue of 6.9 billion dollars and that amount increased to 14.8 billion in 2012.

The Sales, Demographics and Usage Data provided a good idea of what my data should look like. It also shows where the industry is in terms of growth and demographics.

Gamer Demographics Dispel Stereotypes

There is an article on adani.com that goes through a few stereotypes people have about the gaming population and explains how those stereotypes are not true through stats discovered by the ESA and other similar sources. The first few stereotypes dispelled are related to gender. Not only do women make up 45% of the gaming population, but there are actually twice as many women over the age of 18 playing video games than boys under the age of 18. 50% of gamers work full-time and only 11% are unemployed, dispelling the stereotype that gamers sit in their mom’s basement and play games all day.

This article is important because we need stop thinking of gamers as just the cliché nerdy character you see in 90’s pop culture. There is a wide variety of gamers and a wide variety of games. The sooner we accept the fact there more types of games than Grand Theft Auto and Call of Duty and more types of people playing games than the guy living in his mom’s basement with no job, the sooner the industry can move forward. This means games aimed at a different audience can get more time in the spotlight and developers can take more risks with the types of games they create.

How Facebook Inspired *Remember Me* to Drop Global Warming, and why its Protagonist had to be a Woman

There is an article on Penny Arcade about the 2013 action-adventure game, *Remember Me.* The game’s director, Jean-Max Moris, had a difficult time pitching the game to publishers simply because the protagonist is a woman. He got responses such as “Well, we don't want to publish it because that's not going to succeed. You can't have a female character in games. It has to be a male character, simple as that.” Changing the character to a man was not an option either. Moris then says “We wanted to be able to tease on Nilin's [main character] private life, and that means for instance, at one point, we wanted a scene where she was kissing a guy. We had people tell us, 'You can't make a dude like the player kiss another dude in the game, that's going to feel awkward.'”

This way of thinking is holding game development back. “I'm like, 'If you think like that, there's no way the medium's going to mature,'” Moris said. “There's a level of immersion that you need to be at, but it's not like your sexual orientation is being questioned by playing a game. I don't know, that's extremely weird to me.” There are so many different types of people playing video games these days. Different people may look for different features and themes in their games. The best way for the industry to progress is to take a better look at who is playing games and adjust the efforts of game development to appeal to the demographics who are often overlooked.