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23 April 2024

The Future of Gaming & Escapism:

Why Programmers Should Develop an Oasis-Like Virtual World

The Oasis in *Ready Player One* by Ernest Cline is a VR MMO game and tool where players are fully immersed. The Oasis can be used as a game, a learning tool, or just for socializing. The creation of a game like the Oasis in the real world could greatly benefit people in many different ways, such as as an escape from the real world, a way to express yourself, and as a way to socialize in our world of mass introversion. Because of these reasons, and many others, programmers should make an Oasis-like virtual world.

Through the use of the Oasis or an Oasis-like environment in the real world users would be able to “escape” from their own reality and their problems to be able to relax without the constant looming threat that is the weight of responsibilities in the real world. This claim is backed up throughout the novel by Wade’s living spaces. In the first section of the book Wade lived in a horrible housing environment which was the stacks, as well as the horrible state that the world’s in. Because of this he just wants to dissociate himself from the real world as much as possible, which he does through his use of the Oasis. “A total of 15 people lived in my aunt’s trailer,” (Cline 13), “We no longer have enough money to keep our civilization running,” (Cline 17). This citation shows how Wade’s real world is somewhat of a tragedy, making him much more influenced to escape his real world and flee to the Oasis.

As introversion continues to rise in the modern era, a way for people around the world to be able to freely socialize without fear of being judged because of many different factors about them would absolutely help those who are too intimidated to make friends in the real world. This is especially shown through the fact that you can be totally anonymous in the Oasis. Although the way Wade shares this thought could be perceived as negative, it does show the power behind anonymity in the online world, “I was just another sad, lost, lonely soul, wasting his life on a glorified video game. But not in the Oasis. There, I was the great Parzival. World famous gunter and international celebrity.”(198). This excerpt backs up the original claim because it shows how disconnected you can make your digital and real identities so that you don't have to worry about being judged for any physical character trait or any preconceived ideas that one might have about you.

Lastly, making a program like the Oasis can also have physical benefits on its users. Using systems that measure the users calorie intake and nutritional information would allow the system to encourage the user to meet their goals and even lock them out until they meet them. This point is proved in the second section of the book when Wade decides to stick to a strict dieting and workout practices. “My computer monitored my vital signs and kept track of exactly how many calories I burned during the course of each day. If I didn't meet my daily exercise requirements, the system prevented me from logging into my Oasis account.”(196). This proves how effective an online world like the Oasis could be at helping improve its users' health, even though it is traditionally thought of as an extremely sedentary activity.

Putting together everything, the major benefits that would come from developing an Oasis-like game such as being able to escape low quality living situations, increase social interactivity, and the ability to improve your physical health would greatly outweigh the

negatives. Because of all these reasons programmers around the world should develop an online VR MMO similar to the Oasis from Ready Player One.