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Web Dev 2, INMD 214

03/06/23

### **Final Proposal:**

Video Games. They are by far the most popular form of electronic entertainment in the world, with an estimated market size of \$220 billion. The industry has existed for nearly 50 years, advancing from pixels moving across a screen to motion captured actors in 4k. The gameplay has evolved from sports and dungeon crawlers to battle royales and vast open worlds. But with all this change and advancement over the cumulative existence of the artform, the last 10-15 years have seen a period of stagnation reminiscent of the market leading up to the crash of 1983. So why are games stagnating? Each year there is a leap in technological capabilities, games are more beautiful than ever. So why is it, that year after year, AAA studios ship the same games with fresh coat of paint? Call of Duty, Assassins Creed, Madden, FIFA, these are just the blatant examples. Even in the indie market, they use the same gameplay loops, the same pillars, the same objectives. Is it a matter of consumption? Are developers destined to forever recreate and refine the same concepts they have played or made before? How do we reignite ingenuity and creativity in the industry? As a future developer, the current state of the industry's products and workplaces has me beyond worried about my place in the continued development of this amazing and transformative artform.

In my final project, I would like to explore the current state of AAA games and their development. To learn more about the individual experiences of different developers and the

process of developing a game on that scale. I would like to interview some of the staff at Columbia College with experience in the industry as well as some other game-focused students. I will do my best to get into contact with development studios and attempt to get an interview with a developer, but I have my doubts about that possibility. My interviews would consist of questions focused on an individual's experience with video games and their development: What was the game which awoke their desire to develop? What was their original goal as a developer? How was the reality of game development different from how they envisioned it? Are they satisfied with the current gaming market? Do they have any suggestions or wishes for the future of video games?

Video games have the opportunity to be the most influential medium of art and entertainment to exist. The very chance to completely change the way we live our lives and interact with others, but time and time again the vision of their grand purpose is stifled by the suits and ties too afraid to forgo profit in the search of something greater. The medium, like many before it, struggles to move forward in the face of secure and safe practices which are guaranteed to line pockets. The truth of the matter is, however, that no matter how safe a path might be it will fade, becoming overgrown and downtrodden. Innovation and courage have always been the driving factors of any growing, profitable, and secure business, without either any attempt at long-term capital is moot; Safety breeds comfort and comfort is the death of growth.