Gang Violence & Poverty

This research will investigate on why Gang violence and poverty are notorious aspects in the lives of citizens living within the cape flats. Our game “Cape Flats Chronicles” is based around the livelihood of a teenage girl living in the Cape flats, so we need to nest out the root problems that lead to these issues, such as gang violence.

We have to start this at the beginning, during Apartheid, which was a time of segregation each race was put into a sort of hierarchy, where the highest level sat the white people, and black people were at the lowest level of this hierarchy. This info seems to be irrelevant to the research being conducted but during this time certain races had to relocate to different areas, where places that seemed like good areas were given to people in the upper level of hierarchy, and people who were classified in the lower levels were pushed out into the outskirts of these places. The people who were pushed out were mainly people of colour, Black, and white people. Which leads to the cape flats, Apartheid correlates to the cape flats, cause coloured people were moved from certain areas of the western cape to the flats which had dense living conditions and limited resources to support a myriad of people.

Due to the lack of infrastructure and resources given to the coloured community in the cape flats, a select few of people resorted to violence and crime to survive, more than 20 years after the annual elections and the people of the cape flats still see no change in living. According to News24 (2022:N/a), ‘Our roads are a mess, kids are playing in potholes, the youth are struggling to get decent jobs. Having access to clean running water, electricity and free education is a pipe-dream. Right now, sadly we don't have any of that.’ Besides crime being a factor in the hardship of cape flat residents, it is not the only issue, poverty manifests the town. With roads unfit for use, no clean safe water to drink it’s almost as if theirs no way out of this nightmare.

Gang Violence is the norm for people living in the cape flats with a rape, theft, and murder taking place almost every day. Young children are familiar more to gun sounds than to nursery rhymes, with adults and kids dying from stray bullets due to gang wars over territory. According to IOL (2024), ‘Children grow up on the Cape Flats more attuned to the sounds of gunfire than nursery rhymes. Too often, stray bullets find unintended targets, causing either death or lifelong scars. For many, the only escape from the violence is through either exceptional drive, education or talent.’

This game will be aimed towards the youth, to show them how many of our coming of age tend to fall into gang violence, due to the fact that they’ve known it all their lives, and being surrounded by poverty makes them think that there is no hope for a better life. As Cape flat chronicles will be about how to survive the roughness of this damaged community, you’ll have choices in associating yourself within gangs, or seeking a way out through education. We also want to demonstrate how for some youngster’s education isn’t always their solution, some pursue music, or a sport. Some end up joining a gang anyways.

Showing this recurring issue to our youth is relevant to the success of our country and the community, gang violence tends to thrive cause, the youth, the teens of the cape flats end up participating in gang violence, making it a never-ending cycle. In terms of poverty they’re surrounded by, the best thing to do is show them that theirs always a way out, No matter the circumstances. We also want to incentives them to participate in solving the issue, not necessarily fix it themselves, but make their voices heard by the government, and the rest of the country, so they can come up with a solution.

Cape flats Chronicles is an Interactive Fiction, Choices Matter. The player will be a character known as Lindiwe who is a 16-year-old girl living in the Cape flats, living in a community succumb by violence and poverty, you as the main character will come across lots of life changing scenarios, your goal is to survive the life in the community. There will be lots of turmoil coming towards Lindiwe such as gangs being one of the main problems in the game, you will come across people that will change the characters life for the good or the better, you as the player will have to make choices for her that will cultivate her life and personality as a whole. Players explore different areas of the Cape Flats, uncovering hidden secrets and side quests. The game periodically provides information about real-life challenges faced by Cape Flats residents, such as unemployment rates, crime statistics, and community initiatives.

Referencing

News24. 2024. 'What freedom?' Gangs, poverty and death - life is a 'nightmare' for many Cape Flats residents, 10 March 2024. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.news24.com/news24/southafrica/news/what-freedom-gangs-poverty-and-death-life-is-a-nightmare-for-many-cape-flats-residents-20220427> [Accessed 10 March 2024].

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