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## The Evolution of Expectation: Understanding GTA Community Sentiment Across Generations on Reddit (490)

### Research Question:

How do the anticipations and discussions on Reddit about the upcoming GTA 6 reflect a shift in gaming culture and community expectations compared to those surrounding the release of GTA 5?

### Background:

Rockstar Games' Grand Theft Auto series is regarded as a cornerstone of video game culture, known for its wide open world exploring and depth of narrative. The anticipation and conversation around the release of GTA 5 and the upcoming GTA 6 provide a unique lens through which to investigate the subtleties of gaming culture and community interactions. This study incorporates data from key studies, such as the influence of online community participation on product success (Zahay, Keiningham, & Aksoy, 2016) and the importance of online gaming communities in determining game popularity and promoting player loyalty (Cheong & Morrison, 2008). These references emphasize the importance of community expectations and attitudes toward new releases in the digital world.

By focusing on GTA 5 and GTA 6, this research aims to contribute to the understanding of how pre-release expectations and post-release sentiments evolve and influence each other within the gaming community on Reddit.

### Data:

The study will collect a total of 500 data points from Reddit using the PMAW and PRAW libraries, targeting specific subreddits to analyze community sentiment towards GTA 5 and GTA 6. We will source 200 data points each from r/GTA6 and r/GTAV to directly capture the anticipations for GTA 6 and retrospective discussions on GTA 5, respectively. An additional 100 data points will be gathered from r/gtaonline, r/gaming, and r/pcgaming to obtain a broader perspective on the gaming community's expectations and sentiments. This collection will span timeframes relevant to the release of GTA 5 and the anticipated release of GTA 6, focusing on textual content and timestamps to ensure the dataset's relevance and comprehensiveness for analyzing shifts in gaming culture.

### Method:

The study's approach includes the usage of Python packages PMAW and PRAW to collect 500 data points from Reddit subreddits pertaining to GTA 5 and GTA 6, with the goal of capturing a wide range of community emotions. A comprehensive codebook is included to guide data preprocessing and analysis, specifying variable definitions such as sentiment scores—categorized as positive, negative, or neutral with VADER—and thematic categories identified through EMPATH, covering aspects such as "violence," "economy," and "social interactions" relevant to gaming culture. This codebook provides thorough coding instructions and data classification criteria, as well as normalization techniques and tactics for dealing with non-textual information and spam, to ensure scientific clarity and repeatability. It also presents an explanation for the analytical methodologies and theme picks, emphasizing their importance in understanding the growth of gaming culture and community expectations. The technique attempts to provide meaningful observations on fluctuations in community attitude surrounding the GTA series by thorough preparation and methodical analysis, assuring the research's transparency, dependability, and contribution to understanding game culture dynamics.

## References:

1. Hutto, C., & Gilbert, E. (2014). VADER: A Parsimonious Rule-Based Model for Sentiment Analysis of Social Media Text. *Proceedings of the International AAAI Conference on Web and Social Media*, 8(1), 216-225.  
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2. Fast, E., Chen, B., & Bernstein, M. S. (2016). Empath: Understanding topic signals in large-scale text. *Proceedings of the 2016 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems*. Retrieved from [ar5iv.org](<https://ar5iv.labs.arxiv.org/html/1602.06979>)
3. Fast, E., Chen, B., & Bernstein, M. (2016). Empath: Understanding Topic Signals in Large-Scale Text. Stanford Artificial Intelligence Laboratory, SAIL-Toyota Center for AI Research. Retrieved from [Stanford University](<https://aicenter.stanford.edu/publications/2016/empath-understanding-topic-signals-large-scale-text>)