

Misfire: An Exploration of the Military First-Person-Shooter Video Game Genre as a UK Armed Forces Recruitment Tool.

A dissertation submitted by

**Harry Toussaint**

In partial fulfilment for the award

**BA (Hons) Public Relations**

**2013-2014**

**CMC Academic Group The Media School**

**Abstract**

*This research paper explores the efficacy of the Military First-Person-Shooter (FPS) video game genre as a UK Armed Forces Recruitment tool. It takes an interpretivist approach, investigating young players’ perceptions of the Military through eight in-depth ethnographical interviews. Existing literature has focused on the influence of traditional military advertising on enlistment propensity. However, the literature on the likelihood of military enlistment in military FPS players is sparse. Findings suggest that experiences of military representations in military FPSs may combine with experiences in other media to produce a violent perception of the military. This can be seen to dissuade young players from joining the Armed Forces. However, findings suggest that these experiences also foster an acceptance of the necessity of war.*

**Key words:** Military Entertainment-Complex, Video Games, Ethnography, Military Recruitment

**Contents**

[INTRODUCTION 9](#_bookmark0)

[LITERATURE REVIEW 10](#_bookmark1)

[Extant military recruitment research 11](#_bookmark2)

[The Military FPS Genre 12](#_bookmark3)

[Establishing the context in which players play 13](#_bookmark4)

[Video game influence 13](#_bookmark5)

[Summary 15](#_bookmark6)

[METHODOLOGY 15](#_bookmark7)

[Research Approach 15](#_bookmark8)

[Sampling 16](#_bookmark9)

[Participant Profiles 16](#_bookmark10)

[Data Collection Tools 17](#_bookmark11)

[Ethical Considerations 17](#_bookmark12)

[Potential Research Bias 17](#_bookmark13)

[Reliability and Validity 17](#_bookmark14)

[Limitations 18](#_bookmark15)

[FINDINGS AND DISSCUSION 18](#_bookmark16)

[Perceptions of the Military and its actions within the game 18](#_bookmark17)

[Experiences of military representations in additional media consumption 21](#_bookmark18)

[School, Family and Friends 23](#_bookmark19)

[CONCLUSION 24](#_bookmark20)

[Limitations and Further Research 26](#_bookmark21)

[REFERENCES 27](#_bookmark22)

[APPENDICES 31](#_bookmark23)

[Appendix A: Participant 1 Interview Transcript 31](#_bookmark24)

[Appendix B: Participant 2 Interview Summary 64](#_bookmark25)

[Appendix C: Participant 3 Interview Summary 68](#_bookmark26)

[Appendix D: Participant 4 Interview Summary 72](#_bookmark27)

[Appendix E: Participant 5 Interview Summary 75](#_bookmark28)

[Appendix F: Participant 6 Interview Summary 77](#_bookmark29)

[Appendix G: Participant 7 Interview Summary 80](#_bookmark30)

[Appendix H: Participant 8 Interview Summary 82](#_bookmark31)

[Appendix I: Participant 2 Coding Table 84](#_bookmark32)

[Appendix J: Participant 3 Coding Table 90](#_bookmark33)

[Appendix K: Participant 4 Coding Table 93](#_bookmark34)

[Appendix L: Participant 5 Coding Table 96](#_bookmark35)

[Appendix M: Participant 6 Coding Table 98](#_bookmark36)

[Appendix N: Participant 7 Coding Table 100](#_bookmark37)

[Appendix O: Participant 8 Coding Table 103](#_bookmark38)

[Appendix P: Participant/Guardian Information Sheet 105](#_bookmark39)

[Appendix Q: Participant Guardian Consent Form 106](#_bookmark40)

[Appendix R: Interview Guide 107](#_bookmark41)

[Appendix S: Ethics Checklist 109](#_bookmark42)

# INTRODUCTION

The United Kingdom (UK) is the largest video game market in Europe (Newzoo 2012). In a 2012 survey carried out by the Interactive Software Federation of Europe (ISFE), 40% of 16-65 year olds reported playing a video game in the past 12 months, with 24% reporting that they played every week. The First- Person-Shooter (FPS) video game genre is acknowledged as one of the most popular worldwide, with its top-selling *Call of Duty* franchise accumulating nearly 140 million sales since 2003 (Statistic Brain 2014).

With reference to the popular FPS title *Doom,* Crogan (2011, p. 76) encapsulates the genre, describing how the player adopts a

*“first-person perspective of the game’s virtual world and attempts to survive frequent deadly attacks by a variety of monsters while navigating a labyrinthine environment in levels of increasing complexity and difficulty”.*

Scholars have noted that in the wake of the 9/11 terrorist attack on the World Trade Center, the narratives of FPS’s began to increasingly resemble the “real-world” War on Terror (e.g. Andersen and Kurti 2009; Leonard 2003, 2004; Shaw 2010; Stahl 2006). Scholars argue that this is a result of “the ideological and material links between war and popular culture” (Leonard 2004), as described by Baudrillard (1991); Virilio (2000); Der Derian (2009); and McCalister (2001). Der Derian (2009) encapsulates this relationship as the ‘Military-Industrial-Media-Entertainment-Network’.

In addition Hollywood ties (Youn 2014), the ‘Military-Industrial-Media-Entertainment-Network’ or ‘Military Entertainment Complex’ involves “the collaboration between the Pentagon (US Military) and the entertainment industries at the site of the popular interactive format, the war-themed video game” (Anderson and Kurti 2009, p.45). Rowbotham (2013) describes how:

*“in exchange for playable material the videogames industry gives the military positive presentations of war campaigns. The benefits also extend to training and hardware, with early Sega teams* (game designers) *regularly switching between Sonic the Hedgehog projects and designing visual display units for attack helicopters. The military also pumps huge amounts of funding into training and simulation programs inspired by videogames”.*

This relationship can be observed as far back as the popular and influential 1993 Sci-fi horror FPS title *Doom* which, three years later, was modified and adapted by the United States (US) Military to produce *Marine Doom.* The new version of the game was utilised by the US Marines as part of their training prior to deployment and was later made available for public download.

Since then, the Military has influenced the production and narratives of war-based video games with the provision of military advisers (Marriot 2002), who’s experience and expertise has shaped the realism and representation of war in many popular Military FPS’s.

As Andersen and Kurti (2009, p.46) assert, military FPS’s are one of the most notable cites where entertainment and the military meet, therefore their contribution to shaping public attitudes to war must be considered. This notion has not gone unnoticed by military recruiters. They have understood “the compelling features of games, such as the heightened sense of realism, total immersion and the intense focus on destroying targets” (Andersen and Kurti 2009, p.49). This has led to the production of video games with the explicit purpose of procuring military volunteers.

In 2002, the US Army launched the *America’s Army* FPS franchise as part of a global Public Relations campaign to boost recruitment by giving players a ‘real’ flavour of Army life. To date, the game has attracted 13 million players worldwide (Andersen 2013). Some US Military recruitment stations also contain games consoles loaded with *America’s Army* (Hurdle 2009). The UK Military followed suit in 2009, with its ‘Start Thinking Soldier campaign, which included an online game in which potential recruits could test out their shooting skills in the first-person perspective on a shooting range. These games and the popular commercial military FPS titles such as *Call of Duty* and *Battlefield* are products of the Military Entertainment Complex and therefore exhibit similar characteristics. These will be explored in the Literature Review.

The UK Armed Forces are currently failing to meet recruitment targets despite aggressive television, radio and print advertising (Beale 2014; Farmer 2014). Previous research on military recruitment has, for the most part, focused on this traditional medium (e.g. Dertouzos and Garber 2006; Harkley et al. 1988; Reichert et al. 2007). However, the literature on the efficacy of the military FPS shooter genre as a military recruitment tool is sparse. This research paper will address the deficit in the literature and explore the perceptions of the military held by UK military FPS players.

# LITERATURE REVIEW

As Reichert et al. (2007, p.399) state, all-volunteer military service systems, such as those found in the US and UK, rely heavily on advertising for lead generation and enlistment influence. In addition, militaries must convince potential recruits of the worthiness of their cause through what Moskalenko (2010, p.249) calls “mechanisms of mobilization”, which aim to “convert civilians into warriors who are ready to sacriﬁce their own and others’ lives in violent conﬂict”. In order to underpin the research and inform an appropriate methodology, the following academic areas have been explored and analysed: existing military recruitment research, the characteristics and discourse of the military FPS genre and past literature on the potential influence of video games.

## Extant military recruitment research

The body of existing research on military recruitment strategies has largely been carried out in relation to the US Military. Dertouzos and Garber (2006) found US Army advertising in the early 1980’s across television, radio, magazines and newspapers to be very successful, increasing high-quality enlistments by roughly 32% (relative to no advertising at all). Conversely, Harkley et al. (1988) studied enlisted soldiers’ perceived influence of the US Army’s ‘Be All You Can Be Campaign’ compared with other influences. The campaign transmitted messages centered on “pay, skill training, personal challenge, advancement, leadership, personal growth, equipment and spirit/teamwork”. They concluded that Army advertising had "some" influence on motivations for enlisting, but that its influence was "limited", citing conversations with Army recruitment officers as carrying greater weight. It was also noted that mass media (i.e. TV programmes, movies and comics) were perceived as having “almost no” influence. However, it is important to consider how news reporting of contemporary military issues might contribute to public perceptions. This is because the discourse of Western media in relation to topics such as the War on Terror often aligns with the official discourse of Western governments. This can be observed in studies from Papacharissi and Oliveira (2008) and Griffin (2004), who found that Western media often present war and intervention in the Middle East as righteous and necessary.

Conflicting with Dertouzos and Garber (2006) but in support of Harkley et al.’s (1988) findings, Reichert et al. (2007) applied Ajzen and Fishbein’s (1980) Theory of Reasoned Action to the efficacy of US Naval recruitment commercials. Their findings suggest that military recruitment advertising is effective in convincing potential recruits of the promoted benefits of a career in the US Navy (i.e. travel, money for college, challenges, opportunities), but fails to convert this belief into interest in enlisting. Reichert et al. (2007, p.408) posit that “recruitment advertising fails to have more than a negligible impact between beliefs and interest”.

A more recent UK Military survey (cited National Audit Office 2006, p.31) found that the top reasons for joining the Armed Forces were “the opportunities for travel, sport/active life, challenging job, job security, skills and training”. The study was thematically similar to Harkley et al. (1988) and Reichert et al.’s (2007) previous research, with a focus on the non-violent aspects of military life, however, the findings conflict in terms of the effectiveness of promoting these aspects. Supporting the UK military survey (cited by National Audit Office 2006, p.31), a National Audit Office (2006, p.31) survey on reasons for joining the Armed Forces found that the three most important factors cited were: “interesting work (94 per cent of current personnel and 92 per cent of former personnel rated this as either ‘important’ or ‘very important’), opportunities to travel (86 per cent and 90 per cent respectively), and challenging work (85 per cent and 84 per cent respectively).”

The cited research displays a considerable focus on the motivations of already enlisted soldiers for joining the Army (Dertouzos and Garber 2006; Harkley et al. 1988; National Audit Office 2006, p.31), with some attention paid to potential recruits. Reichert et al.’s (2007) consisted primarily of 18-20 year olds, however there is little research on the success of Army recruitment campaigns in relation to pre-16 year olds. This suggests that there is a need for further research in this area as “the Services also target marketing activity at young people, before they become eligible to join the Armed Forces at 16 years old” (National Audit Office 2006, p.32).

Previous research shows that, traditionally, military recruitment campaigns have focused on the non-violent aspects of a military career. This can be observed more recently in the British Army’s latest campaign, entitled “More than meets the eye.” The campaign features real soldiers from a diverse range of Army roles including electricians, bricklayers and human resources (HR) specialists, “proving that there is more to the Army than just front line combat” (Ministry of Defence 2014). This is reflected in contemporary western cultures’ aversion to violence: as Mackmin (2007 p.66) describes, “Today’s public and media are less lenient and are quick to condemn when evidence of any apparently unnecessary violence comes to light.” This is supported in a study by Mares (2009), which tracked a gradual decline of violence in Western society since the Middle Ages.

## The Military FPS Genre

Having explored the existing literature on military recruitment efforts, it is also important to establish what sets the content of military FPS’s apart from the non-violent discourse of traditional recruitment campaigns.

Ouellette (cited by Shaw 2010, p.793) describes how “the post-9/11 appetite for Manichean ‘good versus evil’ narratives is increasingly structuring video games”, with the War on Terror featuring heavily (Gregory 2004). This can be observed in various titles from the *Call of Duty* and *Battlefield* franchises, in which the player takes control of a pseudo-real soldier in the UK or US Military in order to take on enemies who, for the most part, hail from the Middle East or Russia. Scholars have speculated as to the potential impact of such video game narratives on players. Shaw (2010, p.795) argues that “war video games are often complicit in reproducing oriental (in the colonial stereotype context) representations and are thus transitional spaces in concert with wider military representations.” In agreement with this, Leonard (2004, p.5) asserts that “war games construct radicalized meaning, thereby providing ideological sanction for America’s War on Terror and its aggression in the Middle East”.

Scholars have also critiqued the genre for its lack of realism, with Leonard (2004, p.5) describing how “within this virtual world, you have the potential to die and kill others without having to face the graphic realities of war.” He posits that this contributes to an increasing acceptance of war. Andersen and Kurti (2009) also highlight the potential dangers of virtual war without consequences and describe how the fact that military FPS’s reward virtual killing might lead to players to developing positive associations with the act. However, there is a lack of research into how the narratives and level of realism within military FPS’s are perceived by players.

## Establishing the context in which players play

The aforementioned literature demonstrates a significant focus on the success and effectiveness of targeted recruitment campaigns. However, additional research suggests that reasons for joining are multi-faceted and may be rooted in other factors. Asch and Orvis (cited by Legree et al. 2000) found that an individual’s propensity to enlist in the Armed Forces is a reflection of societal attitudes towards the military and economic conditions experienced. Legree et al. (2000, p.47) build upon this, concluding that key influencers such as “friends, family, and recruiters,” will act upon any pre-existing propensity to enlist, in order to bring about an actual enlistment. However, Harkley et al. (1988, p.723) found “the family” to have little influence on individuals’ decisions to join the Army. Supporting these findings, Barrett (2011) interviewed 69 members, leaders, witnesses, and victims of the Toto Conflict in central Nigeria and identified six distinct combatant typologies through narrative analysis. These revealed a plethora of underlying motivations for engaging in the conflict which, in addition to recruitment efforts, revolved primarily around social coercion.

The findings of the aforementioned research are crucial to the validity and reliability of this research paper. This is because they suggest that any perceptions of the military developed through playing military FPS’s and the resulting propensity to enlist will also be built upon additional societal and economic factors. Althusser (2009) supports this with his work on what he calls the ‘Ideological State Apparatuses.’ He posits that, within Capitalist societies, an individual’s opinions and desires and the resulting choices and actions are products of established social conventions or ideologies. These are delivered to the individual through the ‘Ideological State Apparatuses,’ which consist of a number of institutions operating within Western society. These are: religion, education, the family, the Law, the political system, the media (press, radio and television etc.) and culture (literature, the Arts and sport etc.). Althusser’s work provides an appropriate framework with which to investigate young, military FPS players’ perceptions of the military by highlighting the various factors that may influence and inform an individual’s decisions. For instance, there is a large body of literature that suggests that many of the war films produced by Hollywood promote Western hegemony and imperialist US nationalism (e.g. Pollard 2002; Davies 2005; Blackmore 2012). There has also been a considerable research highlighting the susceptibility of adolescents to peer group pressure (e.g. Ellis and Zarbatany 2007; Shi and Xie 2013; Dumas et al. 2014).

## Video game influence

Over the past 30 years, a large body of research has been conducted on the cognitive and behavioural effects of playing video games. Studies have indicated the potential benefits to learning and information retention (Mifsud et al. 2013; Evans et al. 2013; Manley and Whitaker 2011). However, as Newman (2004, p.6) describes, most of these studies have “centered on the potentially damaging and antisocial effects” such as the “potential harm related to violence, addiction, and depression” (Granic 2014). In particular, focus has been on the extent to which violent video games manifest aggressive and violent behaviour within players (e.g., Anderson et al. 2010; Ferguson 2013; Lemola et al. 2011). It is important to consider this body of work when researching military FPS players’ perceptions of the military and a career within it. This is because soldiering is essentially a violent profession. This can be observed in a study by Klein and Kümmel (2009), who present empirical evidence for military violence and conclude that violence is an inbuilt feature of the military in many modern societies, albeit an ambivalent one.

It is also worth noting that military recruits experience numerous forms of desensitisation training and video games are increasingly becoming part of such training (Andersen and Kurti 2009). For instance, Greitemeyer and McLatchie (2011) found that playing violent video games increased a sense of dehumanisation, which encouraged antagonistic behaviour. Their research concluded that aggressive behaviour induced by video games is triggered when the player considers their victim to be less human. Supporting this idea, scholars have noted the dehumanising characteristics of the military FPS genre: Andersen and Kurti (2009) note, with reference to *America’s Army*, how the enemy is masked and when hit releases red smoke and falls on the ground. Sisler (2008) argues that, within military FPS’s, coalition force” are adorned with individual identities and personalities whilst the enemy is anonymised. This dehumanising relationship therefore sees ‘us’ as complex and ‘them’ as simple.

Building upon the idea of military FPS content aligning with military and governmental goals, Kontour (2012) applied Michel Foucault’s notion of ‘governmentality’ to the genre. He argues that military FPS’s present a form of subtle coercion that promotes social norms which both adhere to and undermine hegemonic models of Western military masculinity; therefore bringing the values of the player into line with those of Western militaries and governments. Foucault’s term governmentality conveys the idea that “in contemporary society power works on individuals through the concentration of a range of different discourses on specific aspects of our conduct” (Jones et al. 2011, p. 140). Therefore, in essence, Kontour posits that the discourse within the military FPS genre presents players with what he calls an implicit gold standard of what it means to be a man. This discourse (should it be accepted and adopted by players) then serves the hegemonic aspirations of countries such as the US by providing them with a pool of willing volunteer combatants.

Whilst Kontour’s (2012) application of governmentality may be useful in understanding the way in which military FPS’s might increase military enlistment, it is important to note that, in contemporary society, numerous discourses are transmitted from various institutions concurrently. Suggesting that the discourse within military FPS’s could be contradicted, undermined or even vetoed by other economic, political and technical institutions that manage people’s conduct (Jones et al. 2011).

## Summary

The explored literature indicates that the non-violent discourse deployed by traditional military recruitment advertising has had varying success rates. Studies have also generally focused on adults or established military personnel. The potential ideological influence of military videos games has been theorised by various scholars but empirical evidence is sparse. Additionally, there is evidence to suggest that military FPS video games can influence violent behaviour and aggressive tendencies in players. O’Connor (2012) found that the messages in US Army Recruitment video games clashed with real solder experiences of military protocol and suggests that this may cause problems for gaming recruits when assimilating to military life. There is, however, a distinct lack of research into whether the violent nature of military FPS’s could develop into a desire to pursue a career in the military, which has been shown to be an inherently violent profession. Therefore, a gap in the existing literature has been identified.

In addition, the majority of 6-15 year olds in the UK are buying or receiving video games (ISFE 2012) and the UK Military actively targets this age group with its promotional activities (National Audit Office 2006). There is therefore scope for a study of young players’ perceptions of the military and its actions, as well as their feelings towards a military career. This research paper addressed the following three research questions:

RQ1: How do 13-16 year old military FPS players perceive the military and its actions? RQ2: What are the sources of these perceptions?

RQ3: What are 13-16 year olds’ perceptions of a career in the military?

# METHODOLOGY

## Research Approach

The purpose of this research paper is to explore young players of military FPS’ perceptions of the military in order to assess the efficacy of military FPS’s as a military recruitment tool. The review of the literature (whilst acknowledging the potential influence of video games) suggests that an individual’s perceptions of the military are a product of far more than just their exposure to explicit recruitment efforts. Therefore an interpretivist approach was adopted in order to gain insight into the social context in which individuals play military FPS’s. As Walliman (2005, p.204-205) states, the interpretivist approach acknowledges “the unique personal theoretical stances upon which each person basis his/her actions”.

In-depth ethnographical interviews were used to gain a deeper and more contextual insight into the source of young gamers’ perceptions of the military and their behavioural intentions. The interviews were unstructured, only utilising a list of broad themes and topics to loosely guide the conversations (see Appendix R). This decision was made in order to provide a greater breadth of data (Denzin & Lincoln 2000, p.652). The interviews took place in the room or environment in which the participant usually played their game. This was to ensure that participants were relaxed and comfortable, as well as to foster a contextualised conversation rather than a traditional ‘researcher-dominated’ interview (Clair 2003).

In line with the ethnographical style, the interviewing process commenced with participant observation in the participant-observer format, during which the researcher engaged in playing a military FPS game with the participant. This was carried out to immerse the researcher in the setting and situation in which the participant played, thereby gaining deeper insight into their interactions, relationships and actions with reference to the game (Mason 1997, p.60). In addition, this was carried out to develop rapport with participants (Denzin & Lincoln 2000, p.655). This decision also enabled participants to respond to questions in the context of what was on screen in front of them rather than having to recall their experiences. Lofland (1971 cited by Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p.652) describes how much of the data gathered from participant observation comes from informal interviewing carried out during the observation. The decision was made to allow each individual participant to select the military FPS title that they most often played for the purposes of the observation section. This was to avoid any disruption or inhibition of the data collection that could potentially be caused by participants having to familiarise themselves with a new game.

## Sampling

The target population for this research paper was 13-16 year olds who regularly played military FPS’s. This was decided in light of the UK Armed Forces actively targeting this demographic (National Audit Office 2006).

A snowball sampling method was utilised through which the first interviewee acted as a “gatekeeper” (Hennink, 2011), allowing the researcher access to additional suitable participants through introductions and suggestions. This initial interviewee was selected specifically for their fulfilment of what the researcher considered to be a ‘typical’ 13-16 year old gamer (Walliman, 2005).

It was originally intended that four males and four females would be interviewed, in line with ISFE (2012) figures, stating that 56% of UK gamers are male and 44% are female. However, due to time and resource constraints, only one female was successfully recruited.

## Participant Profiles

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Age** | **Gender** | **Game played in observation** |
| Participant 1 | 15 | Male | *Call of Duty 4: Modern Warfare* |
| Participant 2 | 13 | Male | *Call of Duty: Black Ops* |
| Participant 3 | 14 | Male | *Call of Duty: Ghosts* |
| Participant 4 | 13 | Male | *Battlefield 3* |
| Participant 5 | 14 | Male | *Call of Duty: Ghosts* |
| Participant 6 | 13 | Male | *Call of Duty: Ghosts* |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Participant 7 | 16 | Female | *Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 3* |
| Participant 8 | 15 | Male | *Call of Duty: Ghosts* |

## Data Collection Tools

Data from the interviews was collected through a combination of an audio and video recordings and handwritten field notes. Collected data was thematically coded to immerse the researcher in the data and enable thorough identification and interpretation of participants’ experiences (Hennink et al. 2011) (see Appendices I-O).

## Ethical Considerations

It was important to consider the graphic nature and sensitive themes present in military FPS’s and how they would shape the interviews. This was particularly crucial given the age of the participants. Steps were taken (both written and verbal) to inform the parents or guardians of the participants of the topics that would be covered in the interviews to ensure that they were completely comfortable. They were provided with an information sheet (see Appendix P) detailing the nature of research and the themes that would be explored in the interview. Parents were also given the opportunity to ask any questions before the interview commenced and were informed that they could be present during the interview if they would like.

## Potential Research Bias

The researcher recognised that potential bias might arise with the use of snowball sampling to gain access to additional interview participants. Referred participants have the potential to exhibit similar characteristics and backgrounds to earlier participants (McDaniel and Gates 2005). The researcher mitigated this by being purposive in selecting referred candidates, in order to ensure that participants came from a range of situations and exhibited varying characteristics.

## Reliability and Validity

Reliability involves the accuracy of research methods and techniques (Mason 2002) and the achievement of consistency and objectivity (Denscombe 2007). A basic interview guide was used to ensure that the themes discussed were consistent in each interview (see Appendix P). In addition, the coding system (see Appendices I-O) utilised the same themes for each interview in order to produce consistent interpretations of participant responses.

Mason (2002) describes how the validity of data is concerned with how accurately it measures the themes and ideas explored in the research. The researcher was careful not to be leading or suggestive in the way questions were asked. This was to ensure honest and uninfluenced responses from participants.

## Limitations

The main limitation of a purely qualitative approach was that the data could not be seen as representative of the entire population (McDaniel and Gates 2005). However, due to the nature and complexity of the influences and themes surrounding the research questions, it was not viable to interview a cross-section of the population. Instead, a small number of participants were selected who could offer deep and meaningful insight (Iacobucci and Churchill 2010).

# FINDINGS AND DISSCUSION

## Perceptions of the Military and its actions within the game

In the early stages of each interview, participants were asked to describe their favourite things about the game they had chosen to play. All participants described how they liked how realistic their game was. The emergent theme of realism became a useful means through which to explore how closely participants’ in- game experience resembled their perception of real warfare.

Participants often acknowledged the graphics, the range of weapons and the layout of the maps in which play took place and being realistic. Some participants also noted how they thought specific elements of the gameplay resembled real warfare such as how long it takes to reload a gun or how their character can only sprint for a limited time. P6 described how:

*“The graphics are a lot better, it’s a lot more realistic […] I think it’s quite realistic […] like all the weapons and stuff, they’re quite realistic. I’d also say the towns and stuff […] they’ve got realistic suits and stuff”.*

However, all participants were also well aware of the obvious limitations of the games that prevent them from becoming a full realisation of war. The majority of participants described how in real life you do not have unlimited “lives” or “regenerating health”. When asked how closely he thought his experiences within the game resembled what he would imagine real warfare to be like, P5 stated:

*“I could see it being like that if you would say they only let you have one life, because you can regenerate, everyone just runs around. But if you were only to have one life I can sort of see it being more realistic”.*

The same question was put to all participants producing varied responses. P7 described how she did not think the game was representative of real warfare at all, going as far as to point out that the question was redundant:

*“I would like to make more comparisons on like how it’s different to actual warfare but I feel like it’s too obvious to explain”.*

However, it is important to note that P7 had spent time in the Air Cadets and was therefore the only participant to have engaged in anything that even loosely emulated a genuine military experience. Whilst noting that she had not experienced warfare, she described how she had fired a rifle, learned how to march in step and could command a squad of soldiers.

At the opposite end of the spectrum, many participants felt that the game they were playing offered them a taste of what real combat would be like. Whilst playing *Battlefield 3*, P4 compared the game to the *Call of Duty* franchise:

*“On Call of Duty, you know, you’ve got your guns and then you’ve probably got better graphics, but on this you can actually get in a vehicle […] you can actually like blow up some walls and stuff – so you chuck a grenade at it or you shoot a rocket launcher at it and if you have like a big turret you can completely destroy a barricade […] It gives you sort of what it would feel like to be like in the Army, like it gives you a bit more of an in depth than Call of Duty […] the sounds of the bullets going past you and stuff as well”.*

Although participant responses varied in their view of how representative of real warfare their chosen game was, findings contradict the assertions of Leonard (2004) and Andersen and Kurti (2009). This is because participants’ assumed similarities between their in-game experience and real warfare failed to exhibit a desire to join the Armed Forces in order to commit acts of violence. Participants were in fact averse or at least neutral to the idea of killing someone, supporting Mackmin (2007) and Mares (2009). Supporting this further, the majority of participants reported that they would be scared if they had to carry out their actions within the game in reality. In addition to participant aversion to killing, their fear was often attributed to what participants perceived to be a high chance of death. P3 explained:

*“I think it would be quite scary, obviously on this you don’t take it as seriously, but in real life you would have to slowly walk around, you wouldn’t just be rushing around, otherwise you’d be getting killed”.*

P4 also described one of his main reservations about joining the Army with reference to a *Call of Duty* game. He stated how he thought that the worst thing about going into combat would be the waiting on the journey into battle:

*“I’d really hate, say you were in a helicopter just before it, flying over […] just thinking about what’s going to happen […] I imagine it like one of the maps I’ve seen in Call of Duty, it’s like, it’s a big city and it’s just completely destroyed and it’s that but just imagine people fighting and just explosions going off and stuff”.*

This suggests that P4’s perception of the military and his aversion to the thought of joining it can be directly attributed to his experiences playing military FPSs.

The notion of good versus evil was also explored in the context of the game. Participants were asked whether they felt that there were “good guys” and “bad guys” present in the games’ narrative. All participants stated that they considered the side that they were playing on as good and the people they were shooting as bad, thereby providing explicit player acknowledgement of Ouellette’s (cited Shaw, 2010) observation. Participants played as versions of genuine military outfits such as the British Special Air Service (SAS) and the US Marine Core (USMC) as well as fictional renderings such as the ‘Ghosts.’ These representations of Western militaries were generally up against enemies in the form of militant Middle Eastern fighters, Terrorist groups or Russian ‘Ultranationalists.’

Participants were asked to describe the characteristics or actions of the enemies that made them bad. Some stated that they were not sure what the enemy had done or why they were required to kill them. Other participants described how they were “just terrorists”. P2 reported that throughout the *Call of Duty* franchise, the player is often betrayed by a character considered to be a friend or ally:

*“Sometimes you can almost read what happens before it does, some of the people, they don’t look very good, they look dodgy […] they look very dodgy and they sound very dodgy […] they have like a bit of an accent, they’re probably dodgy […] if they’ve got a Russian accent they’re probably not a very good person.”*

The way in which P2 reported pre-empting negative behaviour from a character within the game based on the sound of their accent suggests that he has developed a stereotypical view of Russians. Within the context of a military narrative, P2 can be seen to attribute betrayal and untrustworthiness to anyone with a Russian or “dodgy” accent. This supports Shaw (2010) and Leonard (2004) in their assertions that war games produce oriental representations of enemies. In addition, P2 described how he viewed the Russians he was fighting in the game as inferior to the Western forces his was playing as. He commented that he thought their weapons were dated compared to the high- tech equipment available to his character. Whilst playing through a mission set in Russia, he also stated how poor the country seemed, attributing this view to the dilapidated nature of the environment. Referring to real life he also stated, “America are more advanced than other countries”, suggesting that his perception of Western superiority over its rivals in the game is mirrored in his real world view. This supports Kontour (2012) in his assessment that military FPS’s promote the hegemonic norms of Western militaries.

Participants also reported that they enjoyed the storylines in the games they were playing, with particular emphasis on the characters. P1 described how had developed a particularly strong fondness for a character named Soap, a member of the SAS who features in all three of the *Call of Duty: Modern Warfare* games. He explained that he thought Soap was a “really cool” character and that he could relate to him, as well as stating that he could imagine Soap being a real member of the SAS. P1 even described how his least favourite thing about the whole *Call of Duty* franchise was Soap dying in *Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 3*. P1’s affinity for Soap supports Sisler (2008) by demonstrating the potential impact of the presentation of a “complex and nuanced us” versus a “collectivised and anonymised” enemy. P1 exhibited genuine sadness over the death of his favourite character Soap whilst remorselessly shooting down waves of Russian ‘Ultranationalists.’ This could be seen to support the dehumanising and desensitising effects of violent war based video games as highlighted by Greitemeyer and McLatchie (2011) and Andersen and Kurti (2009). However, it is important to note that, later in the interview, P1 described at length how he felt he could not join to Army because his “morals” would prevent him from killing someone (Mackmin 2007; Mares 2009).

Discussions about how participants perceived the job of soldiers and their role within conflict in the context of the game frequently arose. Participants acknowledged the inherently violent nature of a soldier’s job, both in the game and in reality (Klein and Kümmel 2009). The majority of participants also described how they thought that the soldiers were acting so as to protect their own nations or the world from the threat of whoever they were fighting. When referring to British forces, such as the SAS in the *Call of Duty: Modern Warfare* series, participants frequently used the phrase “for Queen and Country” to describe the motives and values of soldiers. This patriotic sentiment was often echoed when discussing participants’ perceptions of the role and motivations of real soldiers. For example, when asked what he thought about the idea of joining the Army, P2 stated:

*“It would be scary but, to be honest with you, I wouldn’t mind being a soldier because […] you’re doing a good job for your country […] instead of being like an office worker, I know if you’re an office worker you’re doing something for your family or whatever, but to be in an Army you’re doing something good that will benefit the whole country”.*

P2’s perception of the role and motivations of soldiers was the same when referring to reality and the game. It could therefore be argued that his dismissal of the traditional male role of breadwinner in favour of becoming a soldier to “benefit the whole country” supports Kontour’s (2012) application of Foucaultian governmentality to military FPS games.

## Experiences of military representations in additional media consumption

Participants’ wider media consumption was discussed in order to explore additional sources of military perceptions. P3 stated that he had watched episodes of Ross Kemp in Afghanistan, a series in which British actor and documentary maker Ross Kemp spent time with real British soldiers in Helmand Province. P3 was not aware of who the British soldiers were fighting when watching the programme but described how he thought they were brave for risking their lives for their country and “us”. Based on his positive assessment of what he had seen on the programme, P3 was asked if he would like to fight for his country in Afghanistan:

*“Maybe, I think it’s like good, it sounds all good, but then the killing part. Like, you hear* [referring to the programme] *all the stories of people going, not mental, but like getting all… when they finish it they have all flashbacks of killing people and stuff. I don’t think that would be that good”.*

This account is resonant of P3’s response to the idea of carrying out his actions in a military FPS for real supporting Mackmin (2007) and Mares (2009). However, through watching Ross Kemp in Afghanistan, P3 gained an awareness of the potential for psychological trauma when engaging in combat. P3 appeared to be more disturbed by this prospect than the violence itself. Since the topic of post-traumatic stress in soldiers is generally omitted from the narratives of military FPS, it can be inferred that this programme played a more significant role in shaping P3’s perception of a career in the military.

P2 described how he enjoyed action films and had recently seen *Olympus Has Fallen*, a film about a group of North Korean Terrorists forcibly taking control of the White House and holding the US President hostage. P2 was asked why he thought that the terrorist attacked the White House and not Number 10 Downing Street in the UK. His response was resonant of his comments about American superiority when talking about *Call of Duty: Black Ops*, discussed earlier in this section. He described how the White House was the home of “the leader of the Free World”, Barack Obama and that he has the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) at his disposal. Whereas he associated Number 10 Downing Street with menial political decision making stating “they (the US Government) stopped bin Laden, we stopped a double-dip recession”. P2 explicitly attributed these views to his media consumption, stating:

*“All these films, they show all these big like rooms with all this technology […] I pretty much get this off of news and films […] you never see a film where people all gather in 10 Downing Street to like kill off this most wanted man in the world”.*

P2 perceives the films that he has viewed about the US Government as legitimate representations of its nature and motivations. This suggests that film narratives similar to the one found in *Olympus Has Fallen* can promote Western (in this case American) hegemony over the rest of the world (Pollard 2002; Davies 2005; Blackmore 2012); much in the way that Kontour (2012) suggests that military FPSs do.

Most participants also described how they had often seen stories in the news of dead British soldiers being returned from Afghanistan. They stated that it was sad that they had been killed but felt that it was a good thing that they were protecting the UK. P5 described a news story about a British soldier that he had heard on the radio,

*“I remember there was this one person […] he got an award for killing four people when he was all alone or something like that […] he saved loads of people […] that was pretty cool”.*

Although participants were averse to the idea of being exposed to violence personally, P5’s statement suggests an acceptance of the necessity of violence in the preservation of life. The way in which the soldier was ‘heroised’ within the news report supports Papacharissi and Oliveira (2008) and Griffin (2004). P5’s assessment of “that was pretty cool” suggests that his perception of the role and values of a soldier may have been influenced by the discourse of the news stories he had viewed.

Whilst discussing their wider media consumption, participants were asked if they had encountered any advertising for the Army, Royal Air Force or Royal Navy. All participants stated that they had seen military adverts either on television or the internet. Participant perceptions of the adverts they had seen tended to support Harkley et al. (1988) and Reichert et al. (2007) and conflict with Dertouzos and Garber (2006). This is because participants reported either not paying attention to adverts in general or that the adverts had no impact on their desire pursue a career in the Military. Some participants also stated how some of the non- violent aspects of a military career toted in the adverts were quite appealing, such as “making friends” and “improving skills”. However, this was quickly dismissed by their perception of soldiering as being an inherently violent job (Klein and Kümmel 2009). P2 went as far as to state that he did not believe the adverts:

*“You’re out there to fight a war, not to fix a car […] if your job is a soldier, you don’t become a mechanic, you’re a soldier”.*

Similarly, P4 compared the content of the Military advertising that he had seen with the *Battlefield 3*

video game:

*“I think it’s different because Battlefield 3 is like made up, it’s not based on a real thing but it can give you an inside look on what’s happening. But in the Army adverts and stuff, it doesn’t really show you the actual fighting you will do. It will tell you but it won’t show you what will actually do really”.*

This suggests that P4 views the nature of a soldier’s job in *Battlefield 3* as a more accurate representation of reality than the official military advertising he had seen.

## School, Family and Friends

Most participants stated that neither the Military nor anything related to the War on Terror was ever mentioned at school. However, P6 stated that when he was at primary school there was a visit from two Army recruitment officers. In line with the non-violent discourse of military advertising, the officers described how a career in the Army would “improve your skills, make you stronger, braver and socially better”. When asked how he felt about the visit, P6 described how it definitely made him interested in joining

the Army knowing that it would improve his skills. When asked whether he had considered a career in the Army, he stated that he had to a certain extent but he had not given any career much thought yet. This suggests that the delivery of the non-violent aspects of the Army by a recruiter was more effective in fostering a consideration of a career in the Army than advertising, supporting Harkley et al. (1988).

The opinions and views of participants’ parents were also explored with regard to the Military. Accounts support the findings of Legree et al. (2000) therefore conflicting with Harkley et al. (1988) because all participants reported that their parents either never mentioned the military or stated that they would probably be opposed to them enlisting. This is reflected by the way in which all participants had no immediate desire to join the Armed Forces. P3 described his Mother’s feelings towards him enlisting,

*“She said that she would never let me go into it […] I can see where she’s coming from sort of thing. Because she’s read about all like people getting shot and killed and things”.*

This account further supports Mackmin (2007) and suggests that participants’ aversion to violence could have been fostered by parental influence. Additionally, participants often stated that they only watched the news if their parents were watching it, indicating parental influence over the news consumption of participants.

The opinions of participants’ peer groups were also explored. The majority reported that most of their friends played military FPS’s but never had discussions about a Military career. However, P6 described how he had two friends who wanted to join the RAF. He reported having conversations with them about the RAF and stated,

*“I think it’s definitely good, from what they’ve said it sounds like quite a lot of fun to drive around in a plane”.*

These findings support Ellis and Zarbatany (2007), Shi and Xie (2013), Dumas et al. (2014) and Legree et al. (2000) and suggest that the opinions of peer groups may influence an individual’s perceptions of a Military career.

# CONCLUSION

This research paper aimed to identify and explore young military FPS players’ perceptions of the military in order to assess the efficacy of the genre as a UK Armed Forces recruitment tool. Findings indicate that participants largely viewed the Military as a violent institution, suggesting that they have an accurate perception of the nature of a career in the Armed Forces (Klein and Kümmel 2009). In addition, all participants described how the Military exists to protect “us,” stating how the current military operations in Afghanistan serve to “prevent” terrorists from attacking us or to “stop” their operations abroad. However, this idea of a preventative and intervening force for good came hand-in-hand with the perception that a soldier’s main purpose was to follow orders and kill the enemy. This presents a paradox in which the participants seem to have accepted the government and military rhetoric of prevention of and protection against violent acts of Terrorism but feel that it is perfectly acceptable to achieve this through aggressive Military action. Despite this, participant accounts largely contradicted Leonard (2004) and Andersen and Kurti (2009) in their assertions that exposure to virtual, non-consequential war might desensitise players to violence. Participants were in fact averse to the idea of killing and often stated that they would not like to join the Army due to fear of death.

Whilst acknowledging P7, who had spent time in the Air Cadets and P6, whose primary school was visited by Army recruiters, the findings of this study suggest that the primary contexts through which participants could form their perceptions of the military were found in the media they consumed. In addition to military FPS’s, some participants reported watching war documentaries, war films and war related stories on the news. Considering that the majority of participants were averse to the idea a career in the military through fear of violence, it can be postulated that the graphic nature of participants’ experiences of the Armed Forces in their media consumption have amalgamated to produce their violent perception of the military. P8 optimised this point when he stated,

*“in like World War 2 when they sort of advertised the war they showed it as something fun, whereas now we know it’s not actually fun […] it’s different and you could get killed quite easily”*.

This suggests that the explicit use of military FPS’s for recruitment and military support for commercial games is counter-intuitive to the non-violent discourse of military advertising. This can be observed in the findings as often participants commented that the non-violent aspects presented in recruitment adverts would be appealing were it not for the violent nature of a military career.

However, findings suggest that participant perceptions of Western superiority and the righteousness of military operations in the Middle East were contributed to by military FPS’s. This supports Shaw (2010); Leonard (2004); Sisler (2008) and Kontour (2012), however similar notions were recorded when discussing additional media consumption.

There is also evidence to suggest that parental and peep group views may have influenced participants’ perceptions of the military. However, participant accounts generally indicated that their friends and family were neutral in their feelings toward the military.

## Limitations and Further Research

Due to the snowball method of sampling used for this research as well as time and resource restraints, participants were from similar economic and social backgrounds. It could be argued that this influenced their perceptions of a career in the military. This area of research would therefore benefit from comparative studies of military FPS players from different demographics.

# REFERENCES

1. Althusser, L., 2009. Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes towards an Investigation).

*In*: Sharma, A. and Gupta, A., eds. *The Anthropology of the State: A Reader.* New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, 86-111.

1. Andersen, R. and Kurti, M., 2009. From America's Army to Call of Duty: Doing Battle with the Military Entertainment Complex. *Democratic Communique* [online], 23 (1), 45-65.
2. Anderson, C. A., Shibuya, A., Ihori, N., Swing, E. L., Bushman, B. J., Sakamoto, A., and Saleem, M., 2010. Violent video game effects on aggression, empathy, and prosocial behavior in Eastern and Western countries: A meta-analytic review. *Psychological Bulletin* [online], 136 (2), 151–173.
3. Anderson, J. R., 2013. 'America's Army: Proving Grounds' out today. *Army Times* [online], 29 August 2013. Available from: <http://www.armytimes.com/article/20130829/OFFDUTY02/308290054>
4. Barrett, R. S., 2011. Interviews with Killers: Six Types of Combatants and Their Motivations for Joining Deadly Groups. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* [online], 34 (10), 749-764.
5. Baudrillard, J., 1991. *The Gulf War did not take place.* Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
6. Beale, J., 2014. Army recruitment a 'big challenge'. *BBC News* [online], 11 January 2014. Available from: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-25688136>
7. Blackmore, T., 2012. Eyeless in America: Hollywood and Indiewood's Iraq War on Film. *Bulletin of Science Technology & Society* [online], 32 (4), 294-316.
8. Clair, R. C., 2003. *Expressions of ethnography: novel approaches to qualitative methods.* Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
9. Crogan, P., 2011. *Electronic Mediations, Volume 26: Gameplay Mode: War, Simulation, and Technoculture.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
10. Davies, J., 2005. ‘Diversity. America. Leadership. Good over evil.’ Hollywood multiculturalism and American imperialism in Independence Day and Three Kings. *Patterns of Prejudice* [online], 39 (4), 387-415.
11. Denscombe, M., 2007. *The Good Research Guide for small-scale social research projects.* 3rd ed.

Berkshire: Open University Press.

1. Der Derian, J., 2009. *Virtuous War.* 2nd ed. London: Routledge.
2. Dertouzos, J. N., and Garber, S., 2006. The Effectiveness of Advertising in Different Media: The Case of U.S. Army Recruiting. *Journal of Advertising* [online], 35 (2), 111-122.
3. Dumas, T. M., Wells, S., Flynn, L., Lange, J. E. and Graham, K., 2014. The Influence of Status on Group Drinking by Young Adults: A Survey of Natural Drinking Groups on Their Way To and From Bars. *Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research* [online], 38 (4), 1100-1107.Ellis, W. E. and Zarbatany, L., 2007. Peer Group Status as a Moderator of Group Influence on Children’s Deviant, Aggressive, and Prosocial Behavior. *Child Development* [online], 78(4), 1240- 1254.
4. Evans, M. A., Norton, A., Chang, M., Deater-Deckard, K. and Balci, O., 2013. Youth and Video Games: Exploring Effects on Learning and Engagement. *Zeitschrift für Psychologie* [online], 221 (2), 98–106.
5. Farmer, B., 2014. *Army Reserve grows by just 60 despite aggressive recruitment push* [online]. Available from: [http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/defence/10636216/Army-Reserve-grows-by-just-60-](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/defence/10636216/Army-Reserve-grows-by-just-60-despite-aggresive-recruitment-push.html) [despite-aggresive-recruitment-push.html](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/defence/10636216/Army-Reserve-grows-by-just-60-despite-aggresive-recruitment-push.html). [Accessed 13 February 2014].
6. Ferguson, C. J., 2013. Violent video games and the Supreme Court. *American Psychologist* [online], 68 (3), 57–74.
7. Granic, I., Lobel, A. and Engels, R. C. M. E., 2013. The Benefits of Playing Video Games. *American Psychologist* [online], 69 (1), 66-78.
8. Gregory, D., 2004. *The Colonial Present: Afghanistan, Palestine, and Iraq*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.
9. Greitemeyer, T. and McLatchie, N., 2011. Denying Humanness to Others: A Newly Discovered Mechanism by Which Violent Video Games Increase Aggressive Behavior. *Psychological Science* [online], 22 (5), 659-665.
10. Griffin, M., 2004. Picturing America's 'War on Terrorism' in Afghanistan and Iraq: Photographic motifs as news frames. *Journalism* [online], 5 (4), 381–402.
11. Harkley, W. H., Reid, L. N. and King, K. W., 1988. Army Advertising's Perceived Influence: Some Preliminary Findings. *Journalism Quarterly* [online], 65 (3), 719-732.
12. Hennink, M., Hutter, I. and Bailey, A., 2011. *Qualitative Research Methods.* London: SAGE.
13. Hossein-zadeh, I., 2006. *The political economy of U.S. militarism.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
14. Hurdle, J., 2009. U.S. Army recruiting at the mall with videogames [online]. Available from: [http://www.reuters.com/article/2009/01/10/us-usa-army-recruiting-](http://www.reuters.com/article/2009/01/10/us-usa-army-recruiting-idUSTRE50819H20090110) [idUSTRE50819H20090110](http://www.reuters.com/article/2009/01/10/us-usa-army-recruiting-idUSTRE50819H20090110) [Accessed 9 January 2014].
15. Iacobucci, D. and Churchill, G. A., 2010. *Marketing research: methodological foundations.* 10th ed.

Canada : South-Western Cengage Learning.

1. ISFE, 2012. *Video Games in Europe: Consumer Study, Great Britain* [online]. Brussels: ISFE.
2. Jones, P., Bradbury, L. and Le Boutillier, S., 2011. *Introducing Social Theory*. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Polity Press.
3. Klein, P. and Kümmel, G., 2013. The military and violence. A conceptual sketch. *Berliner Journal für Soziologie* [online], 23 (1), 75-89.
4. Kontour, K., 2012. The Governmentality of Battlefield Space: Efficiency, Proficiency, and Masculine Performativity. *Bulletin of Science Technology & Society* [online], 32 (5), 353-360.
5. Legree, P. J., Gade, P. A., Martin, D. E., Fischl, M. A., Wilson, M. J., Nieva, V. F., McCloy, R. and Laurence, J., 2000. Military Enlistment and Family Dynamics: Youth and Parental Perspectives. *Military Psychology* [online], 12 (1), 31-49.
6. Lemola, S., Brand, S., Vogler, N., Perkinson-Gloor, N., Allemand, M., and Grob, A., 2011. Habitual computer game playing at night is related to depressive symptoms. *Personality and Individual Differences* [online], 51 (2), 117–122.
7. Leonard, D., 2004. Unsettling the Military Entertainment Complex: Video Games and a Pedagogy of Peace. *Studies in Media & Information Literacy Education* [online], 4 (4), 1–8.
8. Lincoln, Y. S. and Denzin, N. K., 2000. *Handbook of qualitative research*. London: Sage Publications.
9. Mackmin, S., 2005. Why Do Professional Soldiers Commit Acts of Personal Violence that Contravene the Law of Armed Conflict? *Defence Studies* [online], 7 (1), 65-89.
10. Manley, A. and Whitaker, L., 2011. Wii-learning: Using Active Video Games enhance the learning experience of undergraduate sport psychology students. *Sport & Exercise Psychology Review* [online], 7 (2), 45-55.
11. Mares, D. M., 2009. Civilization, economic change, and trends in interpersonal violence in western societies. *Theoretical Criminology* [online], 13 (4), 419–449.
12. Marriot, M., 2002. Digital warfare gets intense as military advisers take over. *Chicago Tribune* [online], 7 October 2002. Available from: [http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2002-10-](http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2002-10-07/business/0210060539_1_video-games-real-thing-saddam-hussein/2) [07/business/0210060539\_1\_video-games-real-thing-saddam-hussein/2](http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2002-10-07/business/0210060539_1_video-games-real-thing-saddam-hussein/2)
13. Mason, J., 1997. *Qualitative Researching*. London: SAGE.
14. McAlister, M. 2001. *Epic encounters: Culture, media and U.S. interests in the Middle East, 1945- 2000.* Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
15. McDaniel, C. and Gates, R., 2005. *Marketing Research Essentials*. 5th ed. New Jersey: Wiley
16. Mifsud, C. L., Vella, R. and Camilleri, L., 2013. Attitudes towards and effects of the use of video games in classroom learning with specific reference to literacy attainment. *Research in Education* [online], 90 (1), 32-52.
17. Ministry of Defence, 2014. *New Army recruitment campaign hits screens* [online]. Available from: https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-army-recruitment-campaign-hits-screens [Accessed 30 January 2014].
18. Moskalenko, S., 2010. Civilians into warriors: Mechanisms of mobilization in US Army recruitment and training. *Dynamics of Asymmetric Conﬂict* [online], 3 (3), 248-268.
19. National Audit Office, 2006. *Recruitment and Retention in the Armed Forces*. Available from: http://www.nao.org.uk/report/recruitment-and-retention-in-the-armed-forces/ [Accessed 9 January 2014].
20. Newman, J., 2004. *Videogames.* London: Routledge.

*49.* Newzoo, 2012. *2012 Country Summary Report UK* [online]. Amsterdam: Newzoo.

1. O’Connor, A., 2012. The Recruiting Fallacies and Fiction: Symbolic Behavior in U.S. Army Recruitment Video Games and the Clash with Actual Soldier Experiences. *The International Journal of Organisational Diversity* [online], 12 (1), 1-10.
2. Pollard, T., 2002. The Hollywood War Machine. *New Political Science* [online], 24 (1), 121-139.
3. Papacharissi, Z. and Oliveira, M. D. F., 2008. News Frames Terrorism: A Comparative Analysis of Frames Employed in Terrorism Coverage in U.S. and U.K. Newspapers. *The International Journal of Press/Politics* [online], 13 (1), 52-74.
4. Reichert, T., Joo Young, K., and Fosu, I., 2007. Assessing the Efficacy of Armed-Forces Recruitment Advertising: A Reasoned-Action Approach. *Journal of Promotional Management* [online], 13 (3-4), 399-412.
5. Rowbotham, S., 2013. *The Military Entertainment Complex: are you a virtual soldier?* [online]. Available from: [http://www.micromart.co.uk/gaming/gaming/178/military-entertainment-complex-are-you-virtual-](http://www.micromart.co.uk/gaming/gaming/178/military-entertainment-complex-are-you-virtual-soldier) [soldier](http://www.micromart.co.uk/gaming/gaming/178/military-entertainment-complex-are-you-virtual-soldier) [Accessed 1 February 2014].
6. Shaw, I. G. R., 2010. Playing War. *Social & Cultural Geography* [online], 11 (8), 789-803.
7. Shi, B. and Xie, H., 2013. Peer Group Influence on Urban Preadolescents' Attitudes Toward Material Possessions: Social Status Benefits of Material Possessions. *The Journal of Consumer Affairs* [online], 47 (1), 46-71.
8. Sisler, V., 2008. Digital Arabs: representation in video games. *European Journal of Cultural Studies*

[online], 11 (2), 203–219.

1. Statistic Brain, 2014. *Call of Duty Franchise Game Sales Statistics* [online]. Statistic Brain Research Institute.
2. Virilio, P., 2000. *Strategy of deception.* New York: Verso.
3. Walliman, N. S. R., 2005. *Your research project: a step-by-step guide for the first-time researcher*.

London: SAGE.

1. Youn, S., 2013. *Hollywood's military complex* [online]. Available from: <http://money.cnn.com/2013/12/19/news/companies/hollywood-military.pr.fortune/> [Accessed 16 February 2014].

# 

# APPENDICES

## Appendix A: Participant 1 Interview Transcript

I: Can we start off, just tell me about like a typical day for you. P1: School day or?

I: School day, why you're at school most of the time aren't you?

P1: Yeah so, well typical school day obviously get up in the morning, you know, have breakfast, get changed, go to school, do my lessons. Then when I get home I usually get my homework out the way for the first hour so, and then most of the time I actually just sit down and play on my Xbox. You know, if my mates aren't out I will sit down and play on my Xbox yeah.

I: Cool, so that's like quite a big part of your day? P1: Yeah.

I: How many hours do you reckon you play?

P1: On a school day I reckon I could, maybe about, in between two and sometimes six hours. I: Yeah?

P1: Yeah in between two to six hours. I: OK cool.

P1: Depends how late I stay up.

I: Yeah and what sort of games do you like to play, just in general.

P1: Mainly obviously action games, like war games, that's like kind of the biggest game franchise at the moment, it's things to do with action and war. I mean like I do have a few other games like racing games and Fifa and things like that, but mainly like fighting games. Not necessarily all the time war games like Call of Duty but things like Mortal Combat, Skyrim, things like that. But, things like Call of Duty are a big part of it.

I: Yeah? So you've got a lot of interest in them. OK cool, so I'd be like really interested to find out a bit about what you think about Call of Duty, if that's a game you play. So obviously you've picked your favourite one that we're going to play in a moment. So can you just tell me sort of what's your favourite thing about this particular game?

P1: Well, one thing I think probably I think a lot of people like about it, and me as well, you know it's the biggest like, Call of Duty is the biggest Xbox franchise like out there. So it's kind of, I think popularity kind of draws you into it as well, you know a lot of people are playing it, all your mates are playing it, you kind of want to get in there and play it as well. But that's not just it, I do really find it a really fun game, you know like, I don't know really, it's kind of like, it's kind of like a release, if you know what I mean? Like, you get to sort of see like.

I: So are there any like particular aspects of the game that you like?

P1: Well, I think the Call of Duty story lines are amazing, I mean not so much for the World at War and the Black Ops I think the story lines for them aren't so good but the Modern Warfare story lines are amazing, I personally think, from start to finish. Obviously I think Soap dying was a little bit of a bad point but I think my favourite thing is just the online how, you know you can do all these things with like the like characters but then you can also go online and play with your mates, you know, play against them with them you can have competitions, things like that, you know, work together and it's just yeah, it's just really fun being able to play with your mates like with it.

I: Awesome, I'm quite interested in what you said about the story lines being really good in Call of Duty. I mean is there anything in particular. I mean can you tell me about what it is about the stories that you really enjoy?

P1: Well, the thing I like about the Modern Warfare story line is that it carries on through all three of the games. Like, if you think about World at War, Black Ops, Black Ops II and Ghosts they're kind of a little bit disjointed, apart from Black Ops and Black Ops II obviously. But, you know, it's got a clear story line going through the whole way through, you know, it's got a main villain, you know, like in the first one it's, oh what's his name?

I: I can't remember his name.

P1: The first one, he's got the missing arm.

I: I know who you mean, it's on the tip of my tongue.

P1: Yeah, yeah.

I: Oh what's his name?

P1: Zakhaev, you've got Zakhaev in the first one, which you obviously kill at the end then in the second and third one you've got Makarov, like through both of them. But you actually find out in the third one that Makarov has a link back to Zakhaev.

I: Oh OK yeah.

P1: So it's all a massive link and in kind of all fits into the story and then you've actually got characters that they focus on like Soap and Price and characters that you focus on. Rather than World at War, yeah you've got like, you've got the characters you are like Dimitri and Miller, the two characters that you play but, you know, they're there, you get their names but it's not really much to do about them. But whereas with like the Modern Warfare story lines it's actually kind of turns into a vendetta between Captain Price and Makarov.

I: Yeah.

P1: It kind of gets a lot more interesting and intense. I: Yeah.

P1: Like, the war's over in the third one but he still goes for Makarov.

I: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Cool man, OK. What do you think is the worst thing about this game? Anything like you don't enjoy?

P1: I reckon there's a lot of patches, I mean this is kind of like a thing that everyone gets annoyed about, online there are patchy spots where people can hack into it and ruin it and stuff. But that's kind of that. But, I'd say the main thing I don't like about the story line in Call of Duty is where soap dies.

I: Oh OK yeah.

P1: That's kind of put a dead stopper to it for me, you know, I don't know if they're going to make a fourth Modern Warfare but that kind of yeah, stopped it for me because you play as Soap in the first one, in the second one you play as Roach until he dies and then you play as Soap again. And in the third one you play

as, you don't actually play as Soap in the third one. You don't play as Soap at all in the third one, but he's still kind of like a main part of the story line and I think killing him off was a bit of a bad choice.

I: Yeah so tell me a bit about Soap, like what's his background, like who's side is he on.

P1: Well so he's on the, obviously he's on the, he's on the side of the SAS in the first one and then the second one becomes the Task Force, the 141. So yeah. he's on, you know, sort of the side of, probably what I've, probably what like most of the players will be playing. You know, English and American, most of like, that's probably the majority of the people playing this game, he's on their side. But, yeah he sort of just starts out as, starts out as sort of a recruit for the SAS, his name's Soap, you don't get his first name, they just kind of make joke about his name being Soap. And then in the second one you get his first name, Captain MacTavish and then you find Captain Price again, he says his name's Soap and all the soldiers are like "what, your name's Soap?" like. But, I just think he's a really cool character, like he's one that like people can like sort of, not relate to, but recognise so like, Soap and Captain Price like you recognise them, like voice wise, appearance wise and how they act, like things like that and you just relate to them straight away, like, sort of, they're very familiar characters, you know, especially Captain Price's accent, massive massive thing that you can just recognise him from. And I think that they were just made so well with so many things that people can recognise them from and it just like built up such good characters.

I: Yeah? So what do you think, so Captain Price, obviously he's SAS, what do you think his like motivations are in the game? What do you think drives him?

P1: A lot of vendetta, a lot of vendetta, especially with Makarov, when he kills Soap and with Captain MacMillan when they're finding Zakhaev. They obviously, they find him, they assassinate him, they think he's dead when, but then when, and then, you know, when Captain MacMillan gets injured. And then when Captain Price then finds out he's alive he's like "nah I'm not having that" like "you're suppose to be dead", like Captain MacMillan got hurt so it's again like the vendetta of driving to get to him. And then he builds up a very big relationship with Soap, very big relationship with Soap. Like, he throws, like in the first one he throws the gun to him to kill Zakhaev and then in the second one Soap saves his life, gets a knife into him, then throws it into.

I: That American guy's head, doesn't he?

P1: Yeah the American guy's face and then, and then in the third one obviously Soap is killed and Captain Price goes crazy, throws Uri down the stairs, is like, you know "how the hell does Makarov know you?" like, starts taking it out on him, because he's brought like, like there's like a massive relationship between all the characters. Whereas, you know, things like World at War and Black Ops II, it's kind of just like characters on

their own, there's no real like build up of the characters apart from maybe, oh the Russian guy. I: Nikolai? No, he's in the other on isn't he?

P1: The guy, the character, you're leader. I: Oh yeah yeah. What in World at War? P1: Yeah, you're leader.

I: Oh.

P1: Oh, Viktor, Viktor Reznov. I: Reznov, yeah yeah yeah.

P1: Yeah, he's kind of got a bit of a, he's kind of got a good character to him, you know, his accent, how he acts, you know, you, he's probably the only character in that story line you can probably recognise and he's the only one that carries on into Black Ops.

I: Yeah, so what do you think, so like, Soap for instance, what sort of values do you think he, sort of, represents? What do you reckon his, sort of, you know his sort of, maybe like philosophy might be on like his own actions? What do you like he would say about, if he was a real guy, what do you think he would say about his own actions within the game?

P1: Well, like most soldiers he would probably say that it was for his country, you know, he's doing what he needs to do for his country. But then, I don't know, I wouldn't say there's a sense of enjoyment in there but a sense of like, he's good at what he does and he likes what he does and like, in a way it's also for sort of like relationship, he's does a lot, like a lot of the stuff he does in the franchise, like in the Modern Warfare franchise is for Captain Price and a lot of the stuff Captain Price does is for Soap as well. So I would say, in a way, so it's for, you know, Queen and Country, he might enjoy, kind of enjoy what he does and also relationship with Captain Price, like that relationship has always carried on through all of them and that kind of drives them to do different things.

I: OK, so sort of like that brotherly bond that you have?

P1: Like, you know, like the mission where Soap dies is called Brothers til the end.

I: Oh OK.

P1: I think it's called Brothers til the end.

I: OK, so and like how do you feel about this whole idea of like Queen and Country and, you know?

P1: Well, I can understand, like fighting for you're Queen and Country, you know, if it comes down to your country or their country, you're going to choose your country, you're going to fight for your country like, and the people you care about in your country. But there are some things in, you know, fighting for Queen and Country that I don't agree with because the, you know, the term fighting for Queen and country kind of means you'll do anything for your country but that's not necessarily always the right thing, like there are a lot of things that soldiers and people do that aren't, you know, morally right, that, you know, they say they did it for their country, they were just following orders. You know, especially with things like the Holocaust, you know, Germany doing all these things, these horrible things, saying they did it for their country, you know, you know you're doing it for your country but it's still not the right thing to do. You know, as much as I love all of the Call of Duty games, you know, there are aspects of, you know where I think that's not quite right.

I: Yeah, absolutely. OK cool, so shall we have a little bit of a game on COD. So this is Call of Duty Modern Warfare.

P1: Yeah the first Modern Warfare. My personal favourite for the storyline. I: Yeah.

P1: So are we going online or playing the story? I: It's up to you, whatever you want to do.

P1: Let's go mission select. I said a lot about the relationships so we'll do the mission with Captain MacMillan.

I: Oh OK cool. 11:52

Can you think of any examples of in this game when one of the characters, one of the soldiers like Soap or

any of the other soldiers you play as does something that's a bit unethical or something that you didn't quite agree with?

P1: Well, there definitely is in Black Ops, when, you know, he goes to, suddenly starts to killing everyone because Reznov tells him to, that's like a little bit wrong but from the Modern Warfare films, I reckon in the second one when the American Captain who decides to, he's evil in the end, can't remember his name, sends Private Ryan in to kill a bunch of innocent people at an airport, just to get the information, that's dead wrong, in my opinion. Obviously it's just a game, it didn't happen in real life but I still think, you know, I personally don't think like people, like the American Government would do that. But you never know.

I: Yeah of course yeah. 13:23

P1: Right, are we doing a clean sweep or are we doing going through there silently? I: It's up to you mate, however you want to do it.

14:13

P1: That's another thing I like about Call of Duty is the freedom to do what you want and I've just died. So that probably wasn't the best decision. But it's kind of like the freedom to do what you want like you can follow their orders or you can do things different ways and that's another big aspect, like good thing about the game. Kind of represents things in like war in real life, you are given orders but it's not like you're set to do things that way, or like a lot of other games where you have to do that or you can't do it. There are lots of different options for doing different things.

I: Sure, yeah. I'll turn it down a bit. 14:59

P1: Shit.

I: It's because I'm talking to you at the same time that's probably why.

P1: OK, I'm going to do it properly, I'm not going to try and take everyone out.

15:23

I: So you know you were talking about this sort of freedom to, you know, sort of do, almost like do things your own way in the game? Like, how reflective do you think that is of sort of like real, real warfare?

P1: Well obviously if you're given an order you're, you know, you pretty much have to follow that order, I mean there's not much really going around it. But in a way it kind of reflects reality sort of. In war situations, you know, there's probably not much else you could do.

I: Sure.

P1: But it kind of reflects the reality and realism that there's always more than one option for something, yeah you can always do things different ways. Whereas in a lot of games you have to do something one way or you can't do it at all. But, you know, with Call of Duty you have different options but to be honest with warfare you do, like you know, there is kind of, you know, abiding by your orders sort of thing.

I mean there would obviously be limitations where it says like, you know, oh no there's two people in front of us, we need to get around them and then someone comes up and just merks them both up it's like now we can just go through. You know, there's always that kind of freedom with warfare but, you know, if there's something where you're actually ordered to do something there's not really much you can do to go around it.

16:50

Ah come on! Are they coming from behind? Oh no. I: Oh no, dogs.

P1: OK, here's another bit of freedom, you can pick up another gun. I: Yeah.

P1: Is that it? No.

I: So, in terms of this mission, what would you say is the thing you like most about it? Is it the sort of sneaking around? The tactical stuff?

P1: Obviously I haven't been doing much sneaking around. No I do think it's like kind of, with this mission

it's kind of just brings out like what sort of youth, people, you know people with youth think is cool, like, you know, the fact that, you know, you're in a Ghillie suit so you're trying to sneak around everywhere, it's just that, it's just the the idea of it is really cool and it is just generally a really fun mission. You know, like trying to sneak around or you can go in guns blazing, but that's, evidently from this that is the best option.

I: Yeah.

P1: Like here, there's a helicopter that goes past, you can blow it up with a Stinger but I'm not going to.

I: I'm quite interested in this, what you just said about like people thinking that this is quite cool, like quite a cool, you know quite a cool, like being able to sneak around sort of thing, you know, can you like tell me a bit more about that? Like how, you know, about this idea of it being cool, like, what specifically about it?

P1: It's different I guess because in most of the missions you do go in guns blazing there are some little sneaky parts. But this whole mission is based around you two people sneaking, taking down like a whole bunch of people.

I: Yeah.

P1: Like, I don't know, it's just the idea of it, of just two people just undercover taking everyone down, it's like awesome and like you get to play as that, like, you get to play as two people just going around taking down a whole army base. I don't know how I was just spotted. Right stinger, no I'm dead. Yeah, just yeah the idea, it's just a cool idea that you get to play as the people like, sneaking around taking down a whole base, like yeah. And also, the thing with the campaign compared to the online is that you can set the difficulty level and if you're not very good then you can set it to easy and still look really good at the game and still feel really good at the game. Whereas online, there's no difficulty level; if you're against someone good you're against someone good, you can't do anything about it, like.

I: Absolutely. 19:46

P1: See what I mean? Freedom.

I: So obviously, within the confines of the game, like, I'm getting the idea that you think that this is like a really cool mission, like what you're actually, what you're actually carrying out and what you're actually, the actions you're taking. I mean, in a, in reality if this was really happening, is this idea of it being cool still

shine through?

P1: Not so much if it was really happening because if it was really happening there would be a lot more on the line and it wouldn't just be you and me playing for fun, if I die you can respawn and try again. In real life there's a lot more on the line, like I wouldn't associate with fun.

I: OK sure, yeah.

P1: That's the thing, going back to, like, what I said about Soap, him thinking sort of, his job is a little bit fun, that's the thing they can do that in the game because obviously in the reality of the game if you die you die but as the player you can respawn. Whereas in real life I doubt you would get someone who actually genuinely enjoyed killing people in the Army. Like, maybe you could, like, there might be someone who, there might be people who thought "yeah, killing people, this is fun", which obviously I don't agree with. But with the game, obviously as it's a game and it's fictional, they can do a lot more with it.

I: Yeah, absolutely yeah.

P1: But in, you know, in reality no I wouldn't say it was fun, I wouldn't say it would be a fun thing to do. I: OK.

P1: Really! I haven't played this game in a while. I: No that's cool, that's cool.

P1: I've been playing the other Call of Dutys. I: No, no worries man.

21:42

P1: Well this is awkward. 21:55

Right if I get spotted now then.

I: You're basically hiding inside him. P1: Yeah. I'm confused.

22:14

What? 22:25

Right I'm going to go this side of them. 22:43

Another thing about this mission that people might associate with it being really cool is, the character of Captain Price in all the other missions before this, they've actually built him up to be quite a cool character, like he's really hard, you know, he's got a cool, he's got an accent that people can relate to and now you get to play as him and that's kind of like "oh sick I get to play as like this really cool character" like it may only be for two missions but like, it's just like, yeah, people find it really cool that you get to play as this character, that you've sort of seen fighting throughout the whole thing.

I: Would you say you could sort of see him being like a real SAS? P1: Yeah, definitely.

I: Yeah?

P1: Big time, you know, a real down to it like SAS guy, like "this is what we've go to do, we're going to do it right, we're going to do it" you know "how it ought to be done".

24:46

What?

I: So what are they doing there? They're getting rid of bodies or something are they?

P1: Yeah they're getting rid of like sort of like, I don't know. From like what Captain MacTavish said about

buying people out probably people that, you know, they can get information from. So, you know, it's kind of, it's at another, it's kind of stereotyped to be honest, this idea of, you know, terrorists just doing, just being like, bad people just doing these horrible things, you know. You know, in none of these missions do you see the SAS throwing people out like dead, killing people and throwing them out because, you know, they can't, they won't give information, you know, they make the SAS out to look really good in this. And then you get the stereotype of terrorists just doing all this bad horrible stuff and you don't ever see them doing anything that might actually be sort of righteous. I mean I'm not saying, I'm not like saying I'm on the side of terrorists by any stretch of the imagination but, like you know, it's kind of very one sided.

I: Yeah?

P1: You get, you know, the feel that the SAS are just these good people and yeah, the SAS are these good people then the terrorists are just all bad. I'm going to nick his kill, sorry!

I: And, sort of how do you feel about that?

P1: I mean, it does make the game a little bit more interesting, as in like, you know, you're playing as these, you're playing as the really good guys against the really bad guys and, you know, you want to just kill the bad guys. But on a, you know, moral level it's not the best idea in my opinion, like morally because it's very stereotyped and it's just kind of offensive in a way. I mean obviously, you know, I'm sure there's a lot of, you know, like, there are obviously people in like sort of the Middle East and stuff that play this game and sort of, I think they're Russian in this, in Russia that, you know, play the game but and, you know, it could be seen as quite offensive, you know like, you know their army is just kind of "nah, like you're all bad, you're all bad people, like no", like it is kind of offensive. I mean like it does make for an interest in the game but morally it's not right.

I: That's interesting. 27:42

You were just preempting what he does there, weren't you? P1: Yeah. I've done this mission so many times.

I: Yeah it's a good mission.

P1: My mate cleared this place out once.

I: Managed to kill everyone?

P1: Yeah. I haven't even bothered attempting it but, I was there and it took him quite a few tries to be fair but he managed to clear it all out. There's something preempting like what's going to happen, there's another thing up ahead that I'm going to do, that kind of just, you know, I know it's going to be there so I'm just kind of going to get rid of it.

28:52

Well hurry up then. Look here up ahead. I know you're there. 29:11

I: So the aim of this mission is to assassinate someone isn't it? P1: It's to assassinate...

I: Zakhaev?

P1: Zakhaev yeah, to assassinate Zakhaev.

I: And what has Zakhaev done to deserve this, to deserve being assassinated, what has he done?

P1: It doesn't really, he's just an international terrorist like it doesn't really explain it that well what he's done, it's just kind of at the, you know, at the where, when this is set, he's just kind of not done some good things, like he's done some like pretty bad things, you know, terrorist things and, you know, he's kind of threatening to wage war with the United States.

I: OK, so is there, is there any background on his like motivations that the game gives you? P1: No, there's no background on his motivations but you do kill his son.

I: Oh OK.

P1: But that's after he's started like being bad, so that kind of probably drives him even more.

I: Sure, OK. P1: Yeah.

I: And do you know, what's the reason for them killing his son?

P1: They don't actually kill his son, they want information out of his son and his son kills himself. I: Oh OK and it's the SAS that captures him?

P1: Yeah, their on a rooftop and they've cornered him and he shoots himself. I: And this winds up Zakhaev even more does it?

P1: Yeah. This section here talks about all the people that are dead, it's kind of sort of gets to you like emotionally, this part in a minute. He talks about all the people that used to live here and they've all died and it's all because of Zakhaev. You know, it kind of gets to you a bit you know and it's also a bit, it also does actually come back to this stereotype that it's his fault.

I: Isn't this based in Chernobyl? Isn't it where... P1: This is Chernobyl yeah.

I: Isn't it where the nuclear power plant had a meltdown? P1: I think this is Chernobyl, I'm not 100 per cent sure. I: I think it is yeah.

P1: Yeah.

I: Does the game say that Zakhaev for the...

P1: Well no he hasn't, it kind of you know, he hasn't really, he's kind of just taken up base here. I: Right OK.

P1: He hasn't really done anything about it. I: Oh OK.

P1: You know how if, you know, if this is now like, like you know can now be used by the military why can't they habit, like, you know habit it again, get people to live here again. But yeah. But, oh the mission's over now.

31:49

I: Do you want to just, the next one's the bit where you shoot Zakhaev isn't it? Do you want to play this next one and then we'll call it?

P1: Yeah.

I: So that whole idea of, you're not really sure what Zakhaev's done wrong, you just know that he's a bad guy, he's a terrorist, does that theme sort of follow on through the Call of Duty franchise?

P1: It does to a certain extent, like with Makarov he kind of again comes in and just out of nowhere just starts committing terrorism.

I: Yeah?

P1: And they're just kind of like "right, no idea what his motives are but we're just going to kill him because we've been given orders to do it" but then with him, but then eventually with him it does become a vendetta for Captain Price.

I: Oh so it becomes personal?

P1: Yeah eventually. But at first yeah it is kind of like "well I don't know what his motives are but we've been given our orders".

I: Sure.

P1: And that kind of comes back to the idea of, you know, morality, like, you don't know whether it's right or wrong in the beginning, you're just going to do it, you don't know why he's doing what he's doing, you've just been told to do it.

33:06

I: And how do you feel about this idea of just sort of blindly following orders? P1: Well it depends what the order is.

I: Yeah?

P1: You know, there are a lot of things that are, you know, orders that are given that are morally wrong but you just follow them blindly because it's what you're told to do and it's because what other, you know, what your superiors have said is the right thing to do. But I still don't think you know that's an excuse, you know, for people to do things no matter what it is, you know, morally wrong. Like say if I was in the middle of a war and I was told to drop a bomb on a civilian populated town because it was what I was told to do and it's what they think will solve the war, I wouldn't do it, like, it's not morally right but then you get people who just will do it because they've been told to.

I: Yeah. 34:31

P1: One mistake I've noticed though is in number three in Modern Warfare 3, Uri and Makarov are in the back of that car.

I: Oh OK.

P1: And they're in the back of the car when he gets in there but they're not there now. I: Oh OK, so it's like something added in later?

P1: Yeah. What? The wind was going that way! 35:09

I: You got this.

P1: Yeah, I got this, come on. See, this is another thing about Call of Duty, people get serious about it.

I: Yeah. 35:30

P1: Could just shoot the rocket launcher to be honest, blow everyone up. 35:46

Oh for Christ sake! Not particularly good at this mission. 36:14

I: So from, sort of this mission in particular, obviously you've got the sniper, he's obviously been trained to be like a really effective sniper. How do you feel about sort of like the skills that, you know, like the level of training that someone like this would have to have gone through? Like how do you feel about that? Is that something that's...

P1: Well obviously they would have to have gone through intense training to be this good, I mean obviously if he was the guy I'm playing he wouldn't be very good at the moment. But yeah, they would've had to go through a lot of intense training to, you know, obviously if you're playing the game you don't have to go through that intense training, you can go straight into it and just, you know, play with that intense training already there. But obviously if you came to being in the Army in real life, you'd have to go through all that intense training. I think that's another thing about first person shooters like this is that you've already got the training, like the character's already got the training and it's just a controller so you can, you know, play with all these skills that you wouldn't have in real life. So it's kind of like, kind of like a dream, like in a way, like you can do things that you can't actually do in real life.

I: Yeah.

P1: Unless you've got the training. I: Sure.

P1: I'm going to wait for the helicopter to go past this time.

38:09

Boom! 38:27

Right, this is where the mission gets interesting. Because like in this mission you're no longer undercover, it's kind of you trying to survive because they've found you.

I: Yeah. 39:29

P1: Wow wow wow wow. 41:45

Oh, well. 43:21

Oh I'll put you down here. 43:31

Thanks for the ammo. I: Hmm?

P1: Thanks for the ammo. I: Oh yeah.

44:02

P1: Yes! 44:11

I: So, what do you think this, not just this level, but like this game or this franchise, what do you think it, how would you describe the way it presents what the role of a soldier is? What do you think it says about being a soldier?

P1: Well, obviously with, you know, with, you know, sections like this in the game it kind of shows the hardships of being a soldier, what's difficult about it, you know what they go through to do what they do, stuff like that. But being like a first person shooter for entertainment purposes, you know, it does kind of make it out to be a fun thing to do which, you know, like from what I said, it kind of links back to what I said before about, you know, Soap doing it because, you know, he enjoys it. But, you know, that's, you know, it's not really the case in real life, you know, nothing about war is probably fun in real life I mean, you know like, it's very - oh no not again, I hate it when this happens.

45:46

I: So you're saying, you know, this, obviously you were saying how this is quite a fun representation because it's a game, it's quite fun but, so you were saying something about soldiers in real life?

P1: Yeah so obviously as a game it does make it out to be a fun thing to do but, you know, in real life I can imagine being nothing like that though, you know, the things they go through to do what they do, you know, the risks they take every day just to do all they need to do, it's, you know, obviously it shows the risks they need to do in this game, in all the levels it shows the risks they go through but not quite to the extent that they do in real life, you know, there's a lot more casualties in real life, you know, in this you die, you can just come back and try again. But, you know, in this you know, the soldiers are represented as this, you know as a fun thing to do but it's not like, I can't imagine it being fun.

I: Sure and how does that make you feel about, like a career in the army? How does that make you feel about the idea of that?

P1: Well, I'm not saying if I had to I wouldn't, but, you know, if it was, you know, a choice I wouldn't. You know, it's, you know, obviously I play a lot of games like this but life in the army is, you know, I can't imagine it being anything like this.

I: Sure.

P1: You know, this is made out to be more fun, you know, you die, you try again but in the Army there's so much more, you know, on the line, there's your lives, the lives of the men around you if you don't, you know,

if you fail. And, you know, probably the lives of countless others if you fail your mission. I: Sure.

P1: And, you know, it's just that pressure, I wouldn't want it. I mean obviously if I had to fight for my country I would but I wouldn't want to out of choice.

I: OK. 48:27

P1: I can imagine in real life the Army being as easy as this either. I: Right.

P1: You know in this you get shot your health regenerates, you know, you, it takes ages to, for them to kill you but, you know, you kill them in a matter of like bullets. And, you know, with this they haven't got the best aim but you, obviously depending on how good you are at the game you are, you can just shoot to your heart's content and get it on target. You know, in real life I can't imagine it being anything like that. Obviously, the soldiers would be well trained but in this game their sort of shown to be a little bit better trained than they possibly would be.

I: Sure OK. 52:16

If you don't want to finish it we can crack on with the next bit if you want? P1: Alright, it's up to you.

I: Yeah I think I'm pretty good on this bit. P1: Shall I quit then?

I: Yeah man, yeah we don't need to play it anymore. OK cool, so that was all really interesting, we've had a chat about like the game, the games and how you feel about those. So the next section, I just want to talk to you about maybe like your other, sort of like what other media you look at. So maybe like what you watch

on TV, the sort of movies you like to look, like the sort of movies you like to watch. So do you want to just tell me about the sort of shows you watch on television?

P1: I'm not really much of a television like programme person, I'm more into movies. I: Yeah?

P1: Action, mainly action. I: Yeah?

P1: You know, like kind of mainly fantasy action sort of thing, you know, I like the Lord of the Rings and The Hobbit and, you know, things like Star Wars, which is more Sci-fi than fantasy. But I do like the occasional war film, you know, there's the Hurt Locker, White House Down, which is a bit of a comedy and then there's Olympus Has Fallen, you know, Platoon, Black Hawk Down, you know, I do like all of these, like war films.

I: So what is it about those films that you like?

P1: Well, part of it's interest, I take a massive interest in sort of what the Army do, not in the way that I want to do it myself, I Just have an interest in what they do, how they do things, you know, sort of back stories and things like that. But also, it's just kind of like, you know, typical things that teenagers like, you know, fighting, war sort of films and games. Also comes into like Call of Duty, like you've played the game for yourself, you can also watch, you know on TV, you know other people doing it and sort, you know, it's quite interesting to see sort of, obviously there are, you know, true stories, like war films based on true stories and there's war films that are made up that, you know, it's just interesting to see what directors and stuff can come up with out of real time, like real life situations.

I: Yeah.

P1: And, and on top of all that they're thrilling, they're exciting, you know, a lot of them are very well made and they're just, you know, exciting films to watch down, sit down and watch.

I: OK cool. You said that you feel like it's like, the action film genre is something that teenagers particularly like, would you say that's more sort of boys or girls?

P1: Well I would say the majority boys but there are a lot of girls that I know that like action films, like,

there's a girl that I know that like loves Olympus has fallen. I: Yeah?

P1: Which is, in my opinion, a brilliant film. But yeah I know lots of girls who like, you know play action games and watch action films and stuff yeah.

I: That's cool and what do you think it is about action and sort of war films that gives them such a strong following in people of your age group?

P1: They're thrilling, they're exciting, you know, they're in the action sort of, you know, warfare and stuff, it's all, you know, big and like exciting and interesting and like, sort of, it's more, you know, exciting and in there and more, you know, in control of it than sort of things like Fifa and, yeah, Fifa and little small time action games like...

I: Oh we're talking about movies now.

P1: We're talking about movies? Yeah, well yeah it's the same principle, it's just more in there with, you know, other action, than, you know, other films, you know action films. You know, you get things, you know, like, you know romantic films and stuff like that, that, you know, obviously they're, they can be good films and you know I do like a lot of, you know, romantic films there's a lot of them I like, but action films are the films that are really the most thrilling and interesting and like on your seat like "what's going to happen next?", obviously along with horrors but that's a different kind of on your seat.

I: So just to sort of pick out a couple of the titles that you mentioned there like Platoon, what do you think, you know, when you watch Platoon what do you think Platoon says about being a soldier and the role of a soldier?

P1: It's hard, you know, life threatening the things they go through, you know, it's not easy to do the things they do and, you know, they put so much on the line to do stuff for their country and it's just kind of like people don't, you know, people when they play war games like Call of Duty they don't really respect it as much, you know, they think, you know "yeah yeah yeah, they're really good at that, you know it's just fun and stuff" but it's really not, you know, there's a lot more to it. You know, it's life threatening and they do, they all probably, you know, are petrified when they're doing the things they do.

I: Yeah.

P1: Whereas on, you know, watching it on TV or playing it on a game, you know, it's just easier to do.

I: So do you, so obviously Platoon is about the Vietnam War, do you know much about the sort of like background about the Vietnam War or anything like that? Is it something you've looked into at all?

P1: Not the Vietnam War so much no, not like that. I mean I've looked into a lot of things to do with world war, like the World Wars and stuff.

I: Yeah.

P1: Not so much the Vietnam.

I: OK. So what sort of stuff have you looked at like to do with like, world war, what is like WW1 or WW2? P1: I've done a lot to do with WW1, mainly WW2 to be honest, like there was a, I mean obviously the

Germans were also against the English and, you know, the Americans, but they also shared a massive vendetta with Russia, you know, Russia hated the Germans and it was the same with the Japans and the Americans, they hated each other. Obviously, all the teams were fighting each other, like all the different countries but there were like, you know, main vendettas between countries. And, I know a lot about, you know, sort of Adolf Hitler, you know, he, there a lot of like sort of rumours as well as like he didn't like, he only liked people with blonde hair and blue eyes.

I: Yeah.

P1: Things like that, you know that's kind of the things that a lot of people know and there's also the rumours of did he kill himself, was he assassinated? Things like that, you know, that kind of thing, like conspiracy theories kind of interest me a lot.

I: Yeah? OK. Cool, so do you look at that like on the internet or do you look at documentaries on telly? P1: A bit of both really, there was a documentary about the JFK murder.

I: Oh yeah yeah.

P1: The JFK assassination, where it says he was shot in the head but, you know, from a, from a guy that was sniped from a window. But then there was a documentary saying that there was two bullet holes in him but only one shot was fired from the way that they said it came from.

I: Oh OK.

P1: One of the bullet holes came from underneath and apparently there was a security guard at the window downstairs that when, when the first bullet was fired he sort of raised his gun like that and aimed it at the window and then passed, you know, fired his gun but then said that it was, you know, it was, he was firing at the other person and he got in his car and drove off.

I: Oh right really?

P1: But it's just a conspiracy theory.

I: Yeah yeah yeah, that's cool. So, sort of the stuff you've looked at on the internet, about sort of WW2, WW1, how does that make you feel about the roles of sort of like the US and UK Army?

P1: I think there's a lot they're not telling us. I: Yeah?

P1: You know, especially like, I'm not saying I agree with all the conspiracy theories with America, you know causing like things like 9/11. I don't agree with that, you know, I don't know why they would want to do that. But I think that there is a lot there is a lot about war and a lot of other things that they're not telling us.

I: Yeah?

P1: You know, I mean obviously there's conspiracy theories about, you know, Aliens being real and things like that but like you know, with warfare I think there is a lot that they're not telling us or a lot more that they could tell us.

I: Yeah, OK cool, no that's interesting yeah yeah. OK, cool. So, on top of sort of like, movies and internet usage. What other sort of stuff do you look at on the internet? Like do you go on Facebook? Stuff like that?

P1: I mean I'm not much of a social media sort of person, I have Facebook but I don't have Twitter, Instagram all these things. I mean like I do go on them, you know, talk to people on Facebook, post things on Facebook. I mean I have a Youtube channel, that I post stuff on.

I: What sort of stuff do you post on there? P1: Mainly sort films, vlogs, things like that. I: Oh OK.

P1: You know, I'm not, I don't video me like gaming and stuff. I: Yeah.

P1: I don't do that kind of thing. But yeah, to do with the internet it's really just me, you know, uploading things to Youtube, that's my main usage of the internet.

I: What sort of stuff do you vlog about?

P1: Just like, I mean I do a lot of vlogging about upcoming short films that I'm going to make and stuff like that.

I: Oh OK cool.

P1: And I do do vlogs about, you know, what I've done in the day and then there's, I've got a few vlogs, about just, it's just random. You know, like there's a vlog where I'm, you know, I've got a mate, you know, I'm at home and then my mate's just come over out of nowhere because they're bored in Croxley.

I: Oh OK.

P1: So they've just come over and I did a vlog about them just like, they're kind of like here. I: Just appearing?

P1: Just appearing, invading my house. I: Oh OK.

P1: And then there's a lot of messing around in that vlog.

I: Yeah? That's cool. These short films you make, what sort of topics do they cover?

P1: A lot of different things, I mean like, I mean like I haven't uploaded that many yet. You know, we've shot and are in the process of shooting a lot, like a lot of stuff. But we haven't, you know, edited them all together yet and stuff. But, you know, we do comedy ones, like, we're in the process of doing one called Literal Sayings, which, you know, are things like break a leg and, you know, things like that, you take it literally, like.

I: Yeah.

P1: There's a good one, it's like "do you think I should put the kettle on?" "Nah it wouldn't suit you". I: Yeah yeah yeah.

P1: Like that kind of thing, you know, taking sayings literally. I: Yeah, that's funny, yeah.

P1: And then I am in the process of planning a big, so of a, obviously not a big big like two hour film, that would like be insane for someone my age, with the like stuff I have. But, you know, a bigger film than usual, like usually my skits and stuff are like three, four, five minutes, but I am in the process of making like a half an hour maybe film.

I: That's cool yeah.

P1: So it's not comedy, like a serious film that is, sort of, it's sort of expanding on what my GCSE film about, is about.

I: Yeah?

P1: Like, my GCSE film is two minutes long and it's kind of just gives a rough like basis of what it's about, it's like, you know, I get a girl pregnant then the Dad comes banging on my door and I'm like "oh no, what do I do?" and the film, it's only two minutes.

I: Right, yeah yeah.

P1: And then, you know, I'm planning like a sort of 20 minute, half an hour film based around that but with a lot more excitement in it.

I: Ah OK.

P1: And yeah.

I: Awesome, that's really cool. Didn't know that, that's cool. So, do you read? Do you read any books? Do you like reading newspapers, magazines or anything like that?

P1: I'm not much of a reader, but I have read a few books, my favourite being The Hobbit. But no I'm not much of a reader.

I: OK OK, that's cool. Do you watch the news ever? Where do you get your like news from?

P1: I do watch some news very, fairly oftenly, often, because I do, you know, wanna know what's going on. I: Yeah.

P1: On the planet. But I do get most of my information from things like, you know, Facebook, I mean I do watch the news quite a fair bit. Mainly to see what the weather's going to be like.

I: Yeah, makes sense.

P1: Mainly. But no yeah I do, you know, things like, you know, how, you know, you know, disagreements with countries and like what's happening with the war in Afghanistan and stuff like that, like updates on that, I do look out for things like that on the news.

I: Can you like think of an example of like a recent news story that you've seen that's in relation to like the Army or anything?

P1: Well we're having a bit of a disagreement with Russia at the moment. I: Yeah yeah yeah.

P1: Little bit of a disagreement with Russia at the moment but that's the most recent sort of main update on like sort of disagreements with other countries and stuff that I've seen, yeah.

from that, is there anything that you actively try and keep up to date on? Like, current affairs, or is it just sort of, you know, you'll just watch the news just for a general sort of snapshot?

P1: Well yeah I do watch the news for just sort of general snapshots of what's going on in the planet at the moment. Because I think it's important to know, but there's nothing I really, you know, oftenly, you know, look out for, like, "what's happening next", because you know, if not very, like especially with like, I'm not really much of a TV program person so I'm not like "OK, what's going to happen next? I'm definitely watching this next week" and stuff like that.

I: Yeah, sure.

P1: And it's the same with the news like, obviously I'll watch it to see what's going on in the world but I'm not, you know, specifically, you know watching it every single day to find out like what's progressed from what happened yesterday.

I: Yeah sure. So you said you're interested in sort of keeping up to date on like Afghanistan yeah? P1: Yeah.

I: So do you watch like BBC News or or ITV News? Is there one you sort of favour?

P1: Sort of, it's kind of a bit of both really, my Dad watches Sky News so I watch the news on that and then my Mum watches ITV News.

I: Yeah?

P1: So I keep up to date on that.

I: So you'd say that your, would you say that your, sort of like, news consumption is quite, is fairly influenced by like your Mum and Dad, like what they're watching that's what you'll be watching?

P1: It's like, I get all my like, my Dad does all look out quite often for what's happening with other countries and the wars and stuff. So that's, you know, you know, I get a lot of it from that and then my Mum's just kind of just looking out like for, in general, what's happening like in the world.

I: OK yeah. Absolutely yeah. So what, what would you say, so you're Dad's quite interested in, so what would you say, how would you say your Dad feels about the British Army? Like, what do you think his

opinion of the British Army is and of its actions and things like that?

P1: He has a very strong view on what we do, like as a country. Like, he feels that we're doing, you know, what we're doing at the moment, we're being very brave.

I: Yeah.

P1: You know, whenever he walks past a charity for the soldiers and stuff he, he donates to it and stuff, you know, like a charity box or whatever. But, yeah, he, he has a very strong view on it, he believes that, you know, like a lot of other people, that we're in the right and they're in the wrong sort of thing. But I wouldn't say he's, you know, says that they're like completely just horrible people: "just kill them all", he's not like that by any stretch of the imagination. But he does think that we're doing the right thing as a country.

I: Yeah? P1: Yeah.

I: And how do you feel about that? Do you sort of...

P1: I think it's, like, there's a difference between right and wrong and what's natural, like, I think, like we're doing what we naturally should be doing as a country.

I: Right OK.

P1: Like defending ourselves. But there are, you know, you know, I think we could go about it a more simple way. Obviously if they're going to attack us and they're not willing to debate about it then, you know, we have to, you know, do what we need to do to like defend ourselves and if that means attacking back then, you know, we need to attack back. But, I know, I always say if there is another way around it then take that way round it.

I: OK.

P1: You know, like.

I: Are you saying a less violent option?

I couldn't think about killing another human being. I: Yeah, sure.

P1: I couldn't like, imagine me killing another human being, I wouldn't want that, you know, on my conscience.

I: OK yeah yeah, absolutely. OK cool. So, is your Mum, is she sort of similar, does she have similar thoughts about the Army to your Dad? Or is she...

P1: No, I haven't really spoken to my Mum or heard my Mum speak about the Army at all. I: Yeah OK.

P1: You know, I don't think she, obviously, you know, everybody takes an interest in it. I: Yeah.

P1: You know, they want to know whether, you know, we're going to go to a proper full-on war or not. I: Yeah yeah definitely.

P1: But she doesn't have an interest in it like my Dad does, no I don't, I very very rarely hear her speak about the war.

I: Oh OK cool, alright. And you've got two brothers? P1: Yeah.

I: Do they, do they ever talk about like the Army? Or like about. about sort of what the Army's doing, the UK Army's doing at the moment?

P1: Not really, I mean my little brother kind of talks about it as if, you know, how little brothers do, you know like, just kind of like "oh yeah yeah, we're at war, we're winning" things like that, you know, kind of it's silly immature things, he doesn't really, he hasn't really quite grasped what it actually means at the moment. My older brother, again like my Mum very rarely speaks about things like that, it's not, you know, he doesn't really take much interest in it.

I: Sure OK. OK cool. Just sort of going back to like, what we were talking about before about TV and the internet and stuff. Have you seen or heard any sort of adverts that for the Army or the Navy or the Air Force recently or anything like that?

P1: I've seen a few about the Air Force. I: OK.

P1: Like, things like, you know, Search Army jobs, you know, "You don't need to be a pilot to fly in the RAF", those kind of slogans, stuff in adverts. Yeah that does pop up quite a lot, not so much when I'm on like channels that show films more channels that show programs.

I: Sure.

P1: Kind of, you know.

I: And like how, how, how do you feel about those?

P1: Well, obviously, you know, our Army is going to advertise joining the Army, because obviously they want more people and they need more people, you know, to solve conflict. But it doesn't, it doesn't sway me in any way to join.

I: Sure, OK cool. Right, what are we on now. OK, so like school. Do they talk about the Army at school at all?

P1: Not at all, my school I think there may have been one or two assemblies a year where they mentioned the war, but no not at all really at school.

I: So none of your, none of your, do you have like a careers adviser at school? P1: We have a careers adviser yeah yeah.

I: So do they have, do they ever suggest like careers in the Army to people or have they ever suggested a career in the Army to you or anything like that?

the Army but obviously they're there for if, you know a student wants to have a career in the Army you can go talk to them and they'll know a lot about it.

I: Oh right OK.

P1: But they haven't openly spoken out to anyone or spoken to me about going to the Army.

I: Oh OK, so it's more sort of it you want to join the Army they're there to sort of help you do that, there's no sort of "why don't you join the Army" or anything?

P1: Yeah, there's no like "join the Army" or anything.

I: OK, that's interesting. And they've only sort of mentioned the war like sort of a couple of times in assembly, there's no sort of big, you don't have any sort of like, teachers don't talk about it or anything like that?

P1: No not at all, maybe history teachers but, you know. I: Yeah yeah. But you don't take history?

P1: No.

I: No, OK, cool cool. And what about your mates? Do all your mates play like Call of Duty or Battlefield? Stuff like that?

P1: The majority of mates are like me, you know, they play, you know, these games because they enjoy them, they're fun, you can come together and play them. Yeah the majority of my mates do play games like this.

I: Yeah? OK cool. And how would you say like your friends feel about the Army? Sort of in general? Is there like a general consensus? Do you have any friends who are like really pro-Army?

P1: Well, I haven't really spoken to my mates about joining the Army I mean apart from my mate Declan he has said, I mean he used to really want to join the Army.

I: Yeah, yeah.

P1: And as he got older he kind of says he's still kind of, you know, wants to but he's going to explore other options as well but I think he is a little bit set on the Army at the moment.

I: Yeah?

P1: Yeah. But that's the only mate I've really spoken to about joining the Army. Like he's actually, you know, got a, I've actually got conversation out of it from.

I: And how do you feel about him potentially joining the Army? P1: Well obviously I'd be a bit worried.

I: Yeah.

P1: Like about him, you know, obviously he's my mate, if he's going to go join the Army I'm going to be worried about him like everyday. But like, if that's what he wants to do it's what he wants to do.

I: Yeah OK.

P1: You know, I can't really stop him and, you know, if his morals are right then, you know, well done to him.

I: Yeah?

P1: If his morals are right for it yeah.

I: I think we're about done really, unless there's anything else you want to add or anything or anything else you want to comment on? Anything you want to ask me?

Just sort of as a final question, is there anything that you, what would you say is the biggest, the biggest influencer on your views of the Army? What would you say?

P1: I don't really know, mainly just my morals. I: Yeah yeah?

P1: Like, I don't see, you know, killing a human being for any reason to be morally right.

I: Sure OK.

P1: You know, I mean obviously if it's in defense of your own life and like the life of your like loved ones, like there's someone in the house, then you need to do what, you know, and you need to do what needs to be done. But I still don't see I still couldn't imagine killing another human being.

I: Yeah absolutely.

P1: And especially in the Army, you know, for, you know, reasons, you know, we're like same race like I don't get why we can't get on. You know, I don't understand why we're at war and I don't particularly want to be a part of it.

I: Cool. Awesome, cheers Matt.

P1: That's alright.

## Appendix B: Participant 2 Interview Summary

### Interview duration: 1 hr 15 mins 59 secs

When asked to describe a typical day, P2 highlighted playing on his Playstation 3 as a daily activity, stating that he tends to play for between 1.5 - 2 hours a day.

When asked what sorts of games he likes to play he indicated that Call of Duty, Fifa and Grand Theft Auto were his favourite franchises.

### Observation

P2 selected Call of Duty: Black Ops to play during the observation section of the interview, stating that it was his favourite Call of Duty title. When asked about his favourite things about the game he stated the story, describing how it was like a real life scenario: because it is in a first-person perspective. He described how it gives him a taste of how real war would be and what it would be like to go to Afghanistan.

Exploring the idea of realism, the interviewer asked P2 how he thought the in-game experience compared to what he would imagine a real war to be like. P2 noted the fact that you can die then respawn within the game, this not being the case in a real war. P2 described how the in-game experience presents repetitive

world-wide war, stating how once you finish one mission, you're immediately flown to another war-zone. P2 stated that this was similar to how he would imagine the life of a real soldier.

When asked about his least favourite aspect of the game, P2 stated that when he encounters certain sections of the game that are particularly difficult to complete, that annoys him.

Exploring P2's earlier statement that he enjoys the storyline of the game, the interviewer asked what it was in particular that he like about the storyline. P2 stated that he likes how in the game you explore the main character's back story by playing through flashbacks of past events in his life.

P2 described how he liked the main character "Mason", the interviewer asked him what he feels "Mason's" objectives are within the game. P2 was not clear on what he felt "Mason's" objectives were, describing how he tries to without some important information from some people that P2 couldn't identify, whilst fighting wars.

P2 was asked what he thinks "Mason" would say about his actions in the game. P2 described how he thought he would but quite controlling and demanding. P2 stated that he likes "Mason".

On loading up the game Call of Duty: Black Ops, the screen displayed images from the Cold War. Depicting figures such as John F. Kennedy and Fidel Castro. P2 did not recognise nor acknowledge the historical significance of these, stating that he thought it was something that he would find out about later in the game.

The mission P2 played featured the main character "Mason", escaping from a Siberian labour camp. P2 did not recognise this, stating that he did not know where he was or what he was meant to be doing. P2 stated that he wasn't sure who he was meant to be killing. P2 explained how sometimes the game doesn't tell you what to do. In response to man being dismembered on screen P2 looked away and said "Oh God".

P2 was questioned about his feelings towards a large group of men being gunned down by a machine gun on- screen. He stated that it was scary and could probably happen in real life. P2 described how many of the actions the player takes within the game would almost certainly result in death in real life.

When questioned about what thought this game said about being a soldier, P2 described how he thought it was hard because if you make one mistake you are dead. P2 described the people he was fighting as brutal. P2 commented that the game wasn't very realistic because, as the player, you kill waves of the enemy whilst taking minimal loses to your side. The interviewer asked what P2 thought this indicated about the enemy and P2 stated that they seemed to have poor training. P2 also commented that the lack of modern weaponry available to the enemy suggest that they were less technologically developed than the player's side. The

interviewer asked if P2 thought that this reflected real life, P2 thought that it did, stating that maybe the "old" places, like Russia, cannot afford the best equipment.

P2 was asked how he would feel if he was in the game for real, he replied that he would be scared and he would hide. After an instance of dying, P2 questioned the reality of being killed whilst using a "mini-gun" against an enemy wearing armour. P2 questioned why the enemy do not have tanks, stating that "Russia is a pretty big place for war".

During a section in which he was relentlessly shooting down waves of enemies and blowing up vehicles with a heavy machine gun, P2 stated that he was enjoying that section. The interview questioned what it was he liked about that section and P2 stated that it was good because all of the prisoners were getting justice against their guards. When asked why he thought the people were locked in the prison in the first place, P2 stated that they were there to help their captors find oil, diamonds and coal.

P2 compared a section in which he rode a motorcycle and wielded a shotgun to the film The Terminator. He went on to state that he enjoyed it because he felt it was something that could happen in real life.

P2 commented on how, within the game, Russia looked undeveloped compared with the sections taking place in the USA.

P2 commented that some individuals on the player's side must be from the CIA due to what they were wearing. P2 described how, throughout the Call of Duty franchise, there are people who betray the player, commenting that he can usually guess who it will be. When asked to expand on this, P2 stated that it was because the betrayer tends to look "dodgy" and has an accent, often Russian.

In a cut scene involving John F. Kennedy, P2 predicted that he would be killed in the game because he was assassinated in real life. P2 stated that he knew about this because he watched a documentary about it with his Mum.

### Further Questions

P2 was questioned about television viewing habits. He stated that he watches a variety of shows but not that often. He stated that he likes Eastenders, the CSI (Crime Scene Investigation) shows and The One Show, describe how he'll "watch anything that's on". P2 was asked if he watches the news, to which he replied "if it's on". He stated the when he watches the news, war-relate content is of interest to him, as well as sport.

P2 was asked to provide examples of any war-related stories that he could recall from watching the news. He

described a story about a dead British soldier being brought home from Afghanistan. P2 was asked how he felt about the story, he said that it was sad for the family but he was serving his country. P2 described how the Army are trying to civilise the world but it is difficult with all of the war going on. P2 went on to say that war is bad and the UK sending more and more soldiers to fight in Afghanistan creates more war. P2 also commented that the US and UK try to talk to these people but they don't listen. He commented that if the UK and US eliminated those in charge of Al-Qaeda, there would be no war because there would be no-one recruiting people to fight the US and UK.

P2 was asked what he thought the role of a British soldier was. He replied that it was to kill enemies and to stop them from overpowering the soldier's army. He commented on how it's the foot soldiers' job to kill, not "the foundation" (those in charge) i.e. the Government CIA. He described how soldiers have to kill as many of the enemy as possible so that the Government can focus on taking out the enemy's "foundation".

When asked how he would feel to fulfill the role of a soldier P2 stated that he would be scared but he wouldn't mind because you're doing something that benefits the whole country. P2 commented that he was thinking about joining the Army Cadets.

P2 was question about what movies he liked to watch. He stated that he like any movies as long as they are not all sad or romantic. He preferred comedy, action and war movies and some scary movies.

The interviewer asked P2 to provide examples of any war or action movies that he had seen. P2 listed Die Hard, the James Bond movies and Olympus has Fallen. The interviewer asked what P2 felt the motives of the enemy in Olympus has Fallen were. He stated that they were Korean and trying to take over the White House to have control over America. The interviewer asked why P2 thought the Koreans in the movie targeted the White House and not Number 10 Downing Street. P2 described how the White House has more power than 10 Downing Street. The interviewer asked P2's reasons for thinking this, he stated how movies show the US to be more technologically advanced and more in control than other countries.

P2 was asked about how he felt about the US military killing Osama bin Laden, he stated that it was "brilliant" because he was responsible for 9/11. P2 compared the search for Osama bin Laden to an episode of CSI. P2 stated that he thought that only the USA would have the intelligence to find Osama bin Laden.

P2 was asked if he liked to read, he stated the he hates reading and prefers audio books.

When questioned about his internet viewing, P2 stated that he liked to use it for internet shopping, YouTube and watching Sky Sports. He stated that he likes to watch funny videos on Youtube or anything that's interesting. He also stated that sometimes links from CNN or BBC News pop up whilst he's on Youtube and

if it's something related to war or Afghanistan he will watch it.

P2 was asked what he thought his Mum thinks about the Army. He stated that she wouldn't want him to join the Army but respects what they do. He stated that if his Mum told him that she didn't want him to join the Army he would listen to her. The interviewer asked if P2's Mum ever talks about the war in Afghanistan, he said that she gets frustrated sometimes when she hears about problems in Afghanistan that seem simple to resolve to her. He said that he often agrees with her, stating that even though he is a 13 year old boy, he could have an idea that could stop the war, citing that fact that he plays Call of Duty as a reason.

P2 was asked whether he is taught anything at school about the Army. He stated that he hadn't learned anything yet but he may cover WW1 and WW2 in coming years. He stated that the careers adviser sometimes comes into assembly and talks about "boring" jobs like a solicitor or a teacher.

P2 was asked if he had ever seen any adverts for the Army, Navy or Air force. He described one he has seen from the Navy, quoting "you learn, you fight, you shoot". P2 said that he sees that one all the time, commenting that he thinks they are interesting but scary. The interviewer asked what P2 thought the advert said about the role of someone in the Navy, he stated that it was a serious job because they're out there to stop wars. P2 was asked how the advert made him feel about the prospect of a career in the military, he said that it gave him a reality check because of how scary the advert is.

P2 was asked whether his friends play similar games to Call of Duty, he said that they do. He described how some of them have said that they'd like to join the Army, but some have said that they will "stick with the game". P2 said he was similar to his friends in terms of his opinions towards the Army.

P2 was asked what he thought the main thing was that makes a career in the Army seem scary, he stated the thought of dying.

## Appendix C: Participant 3 Interview Summary

### Interview duration: 58 mins 54 secs

When asked to describe a typical day, P3 highlighted playing on his Playstation 4 as a daily activity. He said that he mostly plays Fifa at the moment but Call of Duty sometimes, he used to play it all the time. He stated that he spends 2-3 hours on a school day but sometimes all day at the weekend.

### Observation

P3 selected Call of Duty Ghosts to play during the observation section of the interview. When asked about his favourite thing about the game, he described how the graphics were really good making it a lot more realistic and he enjoys playing with his friends. P3 also stated that he had only played a few missions from the single player mode and preferred playing online with his friends.

P3 stated that there was nothing he really didn't like about the game, except that the internet connection was sometimes bad when playing online.

The interviewer asked was P3 liked about the online gameplay, he said that he liked playing with his friends and he also like how the soldiers were dressed realistically. P3 stated that the soldiers' suits were how he would imagine real soldiers to dress.

The interviewer asked if P3 knew whereabouts in the world the online map was meant to be located, he said he didn't know.

P3 was asked what game mode he was playing, he stated that it was a "Team Deathmatch", the aim of which is to kill as many of the other team as possible before the clock runs out.

P3 was asked what team he was on, he said he thought he was American but didn't know who he was fighting. When asked if he thought there were good guys and bad guys in the game, P3 responded that in the story mode there is. P3 described how the story mode was confusing but you play as the two American brothers and they are the "good guys".

The interviewer asked what P3 thought the two brothers' motives were in the story mode, he described how America is attacked by "some other country" and the brothers fight the invaders. P3 did not know the nationality of the invading country.

The interviewer asked P3 what he thought the game said about the role of a soldier, he described how they had to lead their team but said he wasn't really sure beyond that.

The interviewer asked P3 how he thought the online experience compared to what he would imagine a real war to be like. He said he thought it was quite realistic because of the guns and the maps.

The interviewer asked P3 if the player is always on the American side in the story mode, he said yes. P3 was then asked what he thought sets apart the "good guys" from the "bad guys". P3 wasn't sure but said "you can sort of tell because they started it".

P3 commented that the story mode is realistic because you've got a pet dog that accompanies you and you can voice command it through a microphone.

The interviewer asked if P3 thought he could still tell the bad guys from the good guys if he hadn't played the story mode. P3 said no, because you would not know the characters.

P3 was asked what he would say if he had to describe the job of the soldiers in the online mode. P3 said that it depends on which game mode you are playing, but in the particular mode he was playing, the aim was to kill as many of the enemy as possible.

The interviewer asked how P3 would feel if he had to do what he was doing on screen for real. P3 said that he though it would be quite scary and you would have to take it slower otherwise you would die. The interviewer asked if that was how P3 imagined real soldiers to be, he said yes.

The observation moved on to the story mode (single player). P3 said that he thought that single player was closer to real war than online because you move slower and "check every room". P3 said he felt a lot more wary playing single player.

The interviewer asked how P3 felt about his character's dog mauling an enemy, he stated that he didn't know but that it was really realistic.

P3 was asked what he thought single player said about the job of a soldier, he said that a soldiers have to stick together to complete a mission.

P3 commented that it takes less bullets to kill someone on single player compared with online which adds to the "fun" of online.

The interviewer asked P3 what he thought his character would say about his actions in the game. P3 thought that his character wasn't doing it because he liked it but he is serving his country.

P3 was asked how he thought the game compared to what a real soldier would have to do, he said he thought that it was pretty realistic, but they would probably go around in larger groups in real life.

### Contextual Questions

P3 was asked what he liked to watch on TV, he said that the likes fishing programmes, Storage Wars, Lizard

Lick Towing and Football.

The interviewer asked if P3 ever watches the news, he said sometimes, if it's on he'll listen to it. The interviewer asked if there was anything in particular that P3 looked out for when watching the news, he said no, if a story sounds good then he'll watch it. The interviewer then asked if P3 ever looks at any news stories about war or Afghanistan, P3 said no but he has seen the Ross Kemp in Afghanistan series. P3 said he liked it because Ross Kemp is with the Army every step of the way. The interviewer asked P3 how it made him feel about what the soldiers are doing in Afghanistan, he said that they are fighting for their country and putting themselves at risk for us. P3 did not know who they were fighting in Afghanistan or what they had done.

The interviewer asked P3 how he thought Ross Kemp in Afghanistan compared with Call of Duty Ghosts in terms of what war is like, he said he thought the game was a bit exaggerated.

P3 was asked what he thought Ross Kemp said about the role of a soldier, he said that they had to be committed and put themselves at risk. The interviewer then asked if it was something P3 might like to do, he said that it would be a good thing to do, but he's heard of people getting post-traumatic stress and that puts him off. P3 heard about this on Ross Kemp in Afghanistan.

P3 said that he was equally worried about being shot and having to shoot other people.

The interviewer asked P3 about the sort of movies he liked to watch, he said all types but specifically mentioned Taken and Saving Private Ryan. He said he liked Saving Private Ryan because most of the characters are brave but one is scared.

P3 was asked about his internet habits, he said that he likes Youtube and he's on it all of the time. P3 said he likes to watch people playing Fifa. He also uses social media.

The interviewer asked whether P3 liked to read, he said he used to read a lot of adventure books but not anymore.

P3 described how he had seen some adverts for the Army and Navy on the internet and television. The interviewer asked P3 what he thought those adverts said about a soldiers job, he said that you've got to fully commit to it and have no doubts.

The interviewer asked how P3's Mum felt about the Army, P3 said that she said she would never let me go into it. When asked if he would listen to her he said that it depended on what he wanted to do. P3 said that

his Mum mentions it every now and then.

The interviewer asked if there was anything that would sway P3 to go against his Mum's wishes, he said not really. P3 went on to say that he can imagine that people with no family or nothing to come back to would be more likely to join.

P3 was asked if anything is said about the Army at his school, he said no.

The interviewer asked if P3's friends play Call of Duty or similar games, he said most of them do. P3 was asked what his friends' opinions were about the Army, he said that most of them don't think about it and that they just play the game because it's fun. P3 said that none of his friends want to join the Army now but that could change in the future, he described how when you're younger you're more scared of things.

P3 described how the main thing that influenced him with regard to joining the Army was the potential for killing and death. He said apart from that it sounds fun and he would join if there was no killing.

## Appendix D: Participant 4 Interview Summary

### Interview duration: 52 mins 10 secs

P4 was asked to describe a typical day for him. He highlighted playing on his Playstation 3 as a daily activity, playing for up to two hours on a school day and considerably longer at the weekend.

He said that he likes to play games such as Battlefield 3, Call of Duty, Grand Theft Auto, Saints Row and Fifa.

For the observation section of the interview, P4 selected Battlefield 3 to play. The interviewer asked what P4's favourite things about the game were, he stated that he liked how the game play feels more realistic than the Call of Duty titles. He described how the graphics aren't as good but you can drive vehicles and destroy the terrain.

P4 was asked if there was anything that he didn't like about the game and he stated that there isn't multiplayer and the graphics could be a lot better.

### Observation

P4 described how during the first mission he was fighting terrorists, who are the "bad guys". P4 was not sure

what he was meant to be achieving in the mission.

P4 commented on how he thought the way in which his character was running was not very realistic. The interviewer asked P4 if he knew who the people he was fighting were, he said they were just terrorists. P4 was asked if he knew what they had done, he described how they had hurt some Marines and "you have to stop them".

The interviewer asked P4 what he thought about a section during which he had to drag a wounded soldier to safety, P4 stated that he thought it was realistic.

P4 described how the game was good because when you are sniping, the bullet will drop just like in real life, making it difficult. P4 said he thought that it would also be difficult to become a sniper in real life. P4 said that there was a lot more recoil when firing weapons in Battlefield compared to Call of Duty.

P4 was asked what he thought the game said about the role and job of a soldier, he said that you have to concentrate, not crack under pressure and act fast. He also said that they are fighting in a different country in order to keep their own country safe. The interviewer asked if P4 thought that this role was similar to the real Army and he said yes.

Whilst pinned down by a sniper, P4 was asked how he would feel if he was in that situation for real, he said that he'd be worried and panicking and there was not wall he could do it.

P4 was asked if he thought that there were "good guys" and "bad guys" in the game and he said definitely.

One of the character's in the game stated "America was founded by terrorists for terrorists", the interviewer asked P4 what he thought about that. He said he thought that anyone could be a terrorist depending on their opinion.

During a section in which the player had to follow a wire all the way to a bomb detonator on his own P4 commented that it was realistic because in the Army you have to follow orders no matter how dangerous they are.

P4 was asked what he thought about a section involving graphic hand-to-hand combat, he said that it demonstrates what soldiers go through daily.

During a particularly intense section, P4 commented that it shows how intense a soldier's job can be in real life.

P4 was asked, if the character he was playing as was real, what he thought he would say about his actions. P4 said that he seemed confused about what was going on and that a war situation would scare just about anyone but he would continue on with his duty.

### Contextual questions

P4 was asked about what he watched on television. He said he watches movies more but liked South Park and Family Guy. He also said he liked to watch all of the Liverpool football matches and Match of the Day.

P4 said that he likes funny films and action films but his favourites were the Star Wars and Lord of the Rings films. The interviewer asked P4 if he watches any documentaries and he said that he had watch a couple on WW2 with his Dad.

P4 was asked if he ever watches the news and he said that his Mum has it on every morning so he watches it over his breakfast. The interview asked if P4 ever sees anything on the war in Afghanistan, he described how he has seen stories about soldiers dying. He said that it made him thankful that it was no one in his family but sad for the soldier's family.

The interviewer asked if P4 had seen any war or action movies, he said that he thought he'd seen a couple but couldn't name them.

P4 was asked about his internet usage habits, he said that he likes to watch funny videos and videos of other video gamers.

P4 was also asked if he liked to read and he said not really but sometimes looks at the sports pages in newspapers.

The interviewer asked P4 if he had ever seen any Army, Navy or Air force advertising on the TV or internet. He said yes and described a Royal Air Force adverting, the tagline of which was "One click of a button could save millions of lives". He had also seen one from the Navy, he described it as showing lots of different roles within the Navy, finishing with the tagline "A life without limits". P4 described how these adverts made the Navy and Air Force seen interesting and social but risky.

P4 was asked how he thought the role of a soldier presented in the adverts he had seen compared to Battlefield 3. He said they were completely different because the game gives an insight into the fighting that you would do as a soldier but the adverts do not.

The interviewer asked P4 how he felt about a career in the military after seeing the adverts. He said that it could be interesting but really dangerous.

The interviewer asked P4 how his parents felt about the Military, he said that they respect what they're doing but would hate for P4 to join. P4 said that he has no interest in joining up because he would be scared of dying, although all the training would be enjoyable.

P4 described how his Dad greatly respects people going into the Army, doing it to protect people at home.

The interviewer asked if P4 learns anything at school about the Army, he said no but they talk about Remembrance Sunday.

P4 said that all of his friends play similar games but said that they've never talked about the Army.

## Appendix E: Participant 5 Interview Summary

### Interview duration: 48 mins 13 secs

When asked to describe a typical day for him, P5 stated that he plays on his Playstation 3 mostly at the weekend but on some week days. P5 stated that his gaming sessions tend to last between two and three hours. He described how his three favourite games were Call of Duty, Grand Theft Auto and Fifa.

For the observation section of the interview, P5 selected Call of Duty Ghosts to play. P5 described how he liked that there were different game modes whilst playing online with his friends. He also liked that the graphics are better than previous Call of Duty titles and that it is easier to be killed whilst playing online.

When asked if there was anything that he didn't like about the game, P5 said that he thought that the range of weapons available was not as good as previous Call of Duty games.

### Observation

The interviewer asked P5 if he felt that there were "good guys" and "bad guys" within the game, he said yes because of a downloadable "map pack" that he recently bought titled "Heroes and Villains". P5 described how the map pack enables the player to play as good guys (such as Soap) and bad guys (such a Makarov) from previous Call of Duty titles.

The interviewer asked P5 what he thought it was about Soap that made him a good guy, he described how in Call of Duty Modern Warfare 2 the bad guys killed lots of innocent people in an airport and Soap was trying to protect them. The interviewer asked if P5 knew why the bad guys killed all the innocent people, he said he didn't know.

P5 said that he prefers online multiplayer to the single player campaign mode.

The interviewer asked P5 what picture he thought the game paints of the job of a soldier, he described how they need to save the world and risk their lives. P5 asked how he felt about the idea of soldiers risking their lives in real life, he said they'd have to be brave and it would be scary. P5 was asked how he would feel if he was in the game for real, he said that it would be cool to go to space but he wouldn't want to do what soldiers have to do in the game.

P5 was asked what he thought made the game more realistic than other Call of Duty titles, he described how online you die after being shot with less bullets.

P5 was asked if the content of the game was similar to what he would imagine a real war to be like, he said sort of but more so if you were only to have one life in the game.

P5 stated that he thought the campaign was more realistic than online.

P5 described how the enemy is known as the Federation but wasn't sure where they were from.

The interviewer asked P5 what he thought his character would say about his actions if he was real, he said that he would say that he's trying to protect people.

P5 said that he'd probably be feeling scared and worried if he was in the game for real.

When asked how he would feel if the UK was invaded like the USA is the in game, he said he would be scared because in WW2 all of the children were separated from their parents.

### Contextual Questions

P5 was asked what he likes to watch on TV, he said he like crime dramas, South Park, Family Guy and Sky Sports News. He mentioned that he also likes the film Troy and similar films. The interviewer asked if he ever watches documentaries, P5 said that the only one he had watch was Africa with David Attenborough.

P5 was asked if he ever watches the news, he said no but he watches a 90 second update on BBC Three before Family Guy.

The interviewer asked P5 about his movie viewing habits, he said that he was currently watching a film called My Boy Jack in English at school, he said it was boring. P5 was asked what the movie made him feel about being a soldier, he said that it made him realise how easily you could die in a war.

P5 said that when he goes on the internet he mainly goes on Youtube and looks at video gaming videos of Fifa and Call of Duty.

P5 stated that he doesn't really read.

The interviewer asked P5 if he had seen any Army advertising on the TV or internet, he said that he had seen one for the RAF Reserves, quoting the tagline "A life without limits". P5 was asked what he thought about it, he said he doesn't really pay attention to the adverts on TV.

P5 was asked what his Mum and Dad think about the Army, he said that they never talk about it but they wouldn't want him joining. He said he would listen to them but he would want to join the Army anyway.

P5 described how at school in history he was study Lord Kitchener and his military recruitment drive in WW1, he said that he thought Lord Kitchener was bad because he was lying about what the war was really like to get people to sign up.

P5 said that he here's things about the war in Afghanistan when his Mum puts on the radio in the car. He said he remembers hearing about a soldier getting an award for killing four people single handed, he said he thought it was cool.

P5 said his friends all play similar games to him but they never speak about the real military.

## Appendix F: Participant 6 Interview Summary

### Interview duration: 57 mins 41 secs

P6 was asked to describe an average day in his life, he described how he spends an hour a day on his Xbox 360 on average. He stated how he used to play Fifa a lot but it made him angry so he switched to Call of Duty to calm down.

P6 selected Call of Duty Ghosts for the observation section of the interview. He described how he really enjoyed the campaign and thought it was the best in the series and enjoyed leveling up and creating classes online. The interviewer asked what it was he liked about the campaign, P6 said that he just likes shooting. He said that this Call of Duty is harder and faster than previous titles.

The interviewer asked if there was anything that P6 didn't like about the game, he said that is annoys him that he gets killed more times than he kills people when playing online.

### Observation

P6 described how you die a lot quicker in this game than on previous Call of Duty titles, this frustrates him, but it's easier when you shoot other people. P6 said that the game was definitely made more realistic by this.

P6 was asked if he thought that there were good guys and bad guys in the game, he said yes, the Ghosts are the good guys, who have to defend against the bad guys - The Federation. P6 described how you play as the Ghosts, therefore they must be the good guys.

The interviewer asked P6 what he thought the online game said about the nature of a soldier's job, he said that he didn't think it would be like in the game, it's too unrealistic. The interviewer asked for an example of what P6 thought was unrealistic about the game, he stated the way in which you can respawn after dying, he said it would be more realistic if it was one death per round. P6 said this would be annoying but would help him improve as a player.

Whilst playing a mission from the campaign, P6 was asked who he was fighting, he said he wasn't sure, "I guess everyone else".

The interviewer asked if P6 thought that the campaign displayed the job of a soldier differently to online, he said yes because you have missions and orders. The interviewer asked if P6 thought how the campaign portrayed the job of a soldier was similar to real life, he said yes because of the missions and the fact that you get order but no because you can respawn when you die. P6 thought it was also unrealistic in terms of the amount of people you kill throughout the game.

The interviewer asked how P6 would feel if he was in the game for real, he said that he would be scared because one shot and you're dead.

P6 stated that he didn't think that soldiers should be allowed to play this game because it's a lot easier than real life. P6 was asked how the game made him feel about the idea of going into battle, he said it didn't seem

too bad but the amount of times that you die made him worried.

### Contextual Questions

The interviewer asked P6 about his TV viewing habits, he said that he likes Comedy Central and Sky One. He likes comedies like Friends. He stated that he likes Match of the Day and anything that looks interesting. P6 was asked if he watches documentaries, he said he does if they look interesting.

The interviewer asked if P6 ever watches the news, he said no but sometimes his parents talk to him about it or he'll hear it on the radio in the car. Interested in the missing Malaysian Airlines plane. He said he rarely hears anything about the war in Afghanistan. He said that he thinks it's good that we're helping other countries.

P6 was asked about what sorts of movies he likes to watch, he likes anything that looks interesting and new.

P6 likes to read football magazines and stated that he was reading a book called Black Friday, which is about a young boy who has to stop a terrorist attack.

P6 mainly goes on Youtube on the internet for video gaming clips and comedy videos.

The interviewer asked P6 if he had seen any military advertising whilst watching TV or on the internet. He said yes, he saw one before a Youtube video trying to influence young British men to join the Air force. He said that it wasn't very obvious that it was a recruitment advert at the beginning. P6 was asked how he thought the advert depicted a career in the Air force, he couldn't remember the words used in the advert.

P6 was asked how is Mum and Dad feel about the Army. He said that his Dad has never been keen on it or spoken about it. He said that his Mum has never mentioned it. The interviewer asked P6 how he thought his Mum and Dad would react if he wanted to join the Army, he said they would be very supportive because he'd be the first one in the family.

The interviewer asked if P6 is ever taught anything at school about the Army. He said that in primary school he had two visits from Army recruiters. He said it made him interested in terms of developing his skill but he hasn't really thought about any career yet.

Learned about WW2 at school.

The interviewer asked whether P6's friends played Call of Duty or similar games, he said yes but they play

Fifa more. They never really talk about the military but two of them want to be pilots in the Air Force. P6 thought this was good, stating that from what they had told him it sounded fun.

## Appendix G: Participant 7 Interview Summary

### Interview duration: 55 mins 48 secs

P7 described how the amount of time she spends on video games varies from day to day depending on school etc. She stated that a typical gaming session lasts around an hour and a half, although Call of Duty tends to make her angry so she'll quit relatively quickly if playing online. She likes Team Fortress, Halo, most of the Call of Duty franchise, although she called that her guilty pleasure, because it's not a "gamer's game". She described how she thought it was immersive but not good gameplay.

For the observation section of the interview, P7 selected Call of Duty Modern Warfare 3. The interviewer asked what her favourite things were about the game, she said that she thought the graphics were really good as well as the maps. She stated how she preferred Call of Duty Black Ops but didn't have it on disk, her favourite thing about that game was the zombies mode because she preferred playing against computer controlled enemies.

The interviewer asked P7 if there was anything about Modern Warfare 3 that she didn't like, she said that she didn't like the other players whilst playing online because people get too angry. She also didn't like the online community for the game.

P7 said that she liked the campaign because she finds it easy to follow with manageable cutscenes.

### Observation

P7 described how she found the game so immersive that she often finds herself losing track of time whilst playing. She stated how it sucks her in because it annoys her so she feels the need to "make a come back". P7 also stated that it gives her a release when she gets a kill and she feels almost "manly".

The interviewer asked P7 what it was about the game that she feels makes it immersive, she stated the graphics, the actual gameplay and the maps. The interviewer asked P7 how close she thought the game was to emulating real warfare, she said 5%, it's not like real warfare at all. She elaborated by saying that although she was in the Air Cadets, she hadn't experienced real warfare although she has fired a gun. She was in the Air Cadets about two years ago but left because she didn't like the people.

P7 described how she prefers playing games online that have a strong sense of community and linked it to real life stating that "you wouldn't want a team full of idiots".

The interviewer asked for more information on P7's time in the Air Cadets, said she enjoyed it.

P7 was asked how she thought the game depicts what it is to be a soldier, she stated that it was to protect. She went onto to state that she thought games such as this promote violence although it's not as bad as people make out, people should know that the game is nothing like real war.

The interviewer asked how P7 would feel if she were to think of the game as an advert for the Army, she said it would be bad because it's so fun. She also felt that these games contribute to young people joining the Army but she is set apart because she had common sense.

P7 was asked what it was that she felt enabled her to judge that real war isn't emulated within the game, she stated that the circumstances in the game would only happen in dire situations. The interviewer asked P7 what she thought set her experience in the game apart from how she would imagine a real soldiers job, she described how in the game you always have the upper hand and will always win. She added that if this was the real Army there would be lots of innocent people being killed and there would be more emotion.

P7 described how she thought it was great that soldiers are out there protecting us but she couldn't do it.

### Contextual Questions

The interviewer asked P7 how she thought a real soldier's job compared to the game, she described how you've got to be concentrated and empathetic because you've got to kill people but also see your friends die. She gave the example of Drummer Lee Rigby and asked how his friends must have felt. P7 was asked how she felt about that incident, she stated that she didn't understand how a man could be killed for supporting our Army. This made her more in support of the Middle East.

P7 was asked what P7 liked to watch on TV. She said she likes Netflix and likes to watch Breaking Bad and Black Books. Not really into films, particularly war films.

The interviewer asked about P7's internet usage, she said she goes on social media and the BBC News website. P7 said she is interested in things to do with the environment. She said she sometimes watches the News on TV but finds it quite depressing so prefers to filter what News she looks at online.

P7 said that she sometimes looks for news about Afghanistan.

P7 has seen military advertising, she said the adverts make it look cool and fun but seem like they're appealing to people who are bored with their lives.

The interviewer asked P7 how her parents feel about the Army, she said they don't really talk about it but they're supportive but would not want her to join. P7 said she would listen.

P7 was asked if they every talk about the Army at school, she said that there are leaflets about military careers in the careers office but that's it. She learned about the holocaust in history.

Most of P7's male friends play similar video games to her. **Appendix H: Participant 8 Interview Summary Interview duration: 1 hr 1 min 31 secs**

P8 was asked to describe a typical day for him, he stated that he plays on his Playstation 3 most days for over an hour. He stated that his favourite games are Grand Theft Auto and Call of Duty.

For the observation section of the interview, P8 selected Call of Duty Ghosts to play.

P8 was asked what it was that he liked about the game, he stated that he liked the maps because he thought that they were realistic. The interviewer also asked if there was anything about the game that he didn't like, P8 stated that there is no zombie mode in this game unlike other Call of Duty titles. He also stated that he prefers to play online.

### Observation

P8 described how there are two factions whilst playing online, the Ghost and the Federation. The interviewer asked if P8 felt that there were good guys and bad guys in the game he said yes, the Ghosts are the good guys.

The interviewer asked P8 what he thought his character would say about his actions if he was a real soldier, he said he thought that he'd say it was scary.

P8 was asked what he thought his character's main aim was within the game, he said to kill as many of the opposition as possible without being killed.

P8 described how he liked sniping whilst playing online because you can kill so many people whilst invisible.

The interviewer asked if he thought his character's aim in the game was similar to those of real soldiers, he said yes. P8 commented that he like the game because of the realistic guns.

P8 was asked if he thought you needed a different set of skills to be a sniper in the game, he said yes, you need better aim. The interviewer asked if he thought that it would be hard to be a sniper in real life, he said yes because you'd need a steady hand.

The interviewer asked P8 in his opinion how close the online game was to what he would imagine real war to be like, he said some aspects are close, such as not knowing what's around you.

P8 stated that he thought the campaign mode was more realistic than the online mode, because there's a storyline.

The interviewer asked if P8 thought that the bad guys in Call of Duty games had similar characteristics across different titles, he said yes.

P8 what asked if there was anything about the single player gameplay that he liked, he said that it is believable in terms of what he could imagine the military actually doing, like secret missions. He said that that it depends on the situation as to whether it's a good thing that the Army might be doing things that we don't know about, giving the assassination of Osama bin Laden as an example.

The interviewer asked how he would feel to be in a firefight for real, he said he wouldn't even shoot. P8 commented that the campaign was a lot more exciting than online.

### Contextual Questions

The interviewer asked P8 what he likes to watch on TV, he said he likes football or anything that looks interesting. He said he likes movies such as action and war. P8 was for examples of war films that he'd seen, he said that he'd watched Green Zone recently. It's a film about Matt Damon in Iraq trying to find a terrorist. The interviewer asked if P8 knew what the terrorists had done, he said they had been fighting the US Army and launching terrorist attacks.

P8 was asked how the fighting in the movie made him feel about the idea of being in a warzone for real, he said scared and lonely. He said the same for Band of Brothers.

The interviewer asked P8 about his internet usage, he said he mainly goes on social media but looks on Youtube as well to listen to music and watch interesting videos.

P8 said that he reads the Metro newspaper and sometimes watches the news on TV. He said that he sometimes sees news about soldiers dying in Afghanistan. He said he found this intimidating because you could get killed easily. He compared it to the advertising during WW2 saying how they guilt tripped people into joining the Army but now we have a much better idea of what war it like.

P8 had seen a lot of adverts for joining the military, stating that they could make people want to join because they don't show the gore. They don't make P8 want to die because he's still aware that he could die.

The interviewer asked if P8's parents ever talk about the war in Afghanistan, he said no but if he really wanted to join the Army they would probably let him.

P8 said he learns nothing at school about the military.

Most of his friends play similar games but none of them are considering a career in the Army.

## Appendix I: Participant 2 Coding Table

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Theme** | **Comments** | **Key Quotes** |
| Realism | Like real life – first person perspective | “It’s almost like a real life scenario”  “Putting you into a scenario, what it would be like to kind of like be in the Army and go to Afghanistan” |
| Perpetual war in the game viewed as  similar to real life war | “You fight a war in the game, then you go home,  then you go out and fight another war… people in real life they’ll have to go out to Afghanistan, they’ll come home for like a two week break,  then go out to like Vietnam or somewhere or Iraq and like fight another war for absolutely ages”  “In the game wars seem to go on for years and in real life wars go on for so long” |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Noted how in real life you would  definitely die in many situations in the game | “In real life you would die, like one hit I’d be  dead – it’s not realistic in that sense”  “In real life, all these people would easily kill you” |
| Described how he enjoyed what he  considered to be realisms in the game | “I like it because it’s kind of like real life, there  would be a lot of like guards” |
| Thought it was unrealistic because you  kill wave upon wave of the enemy whilst suffering minimal casualties on your own side | “I don’t see how any of my team mates haven’t  died yet, apart from those people who just all like blown apart when we walked out the door. That’s probably something that they need to work on, like make it more realistic in the sense that more people of your team mates would die” |
| Said he would be scared to be playing  out the game in real life | “I’d probably be really really scared right now…  I’d mainly just throw grenades, like sit behind here (*cover*) and a throw a grenade and see what happens” |
| After one instance of dying, questioned  the likelihood in real life | “How did I die? I’m not being funny, no-one dies  when they’ve got like a mini-gun against just a guy with like a plate of armour” |
| Stated that the motorbike section was  like real life | “It’s cool because in real life… if you found a  motorbike pretty much everyone would get on these bikes or whatever and they’d go” |
| Suggested that playing these games may  give him insight into war-stopping ideas | “I could be a 13 year old boy but I could have  idea that could stop the war, you never know. Because kids these days have such imagination and stuff and they play all these games, that could put an idea into their head” |
| Narrative | Likes how you explore the character’s  back story through flashbacks – main character “Mason’s” motives in the game unclear to P2 | “There’s loads of numbers that like mean  something from the war and I think it’s for him trying to not give it away but he’s being electrocuted and he just goes and fights wars in like his flashbacks or whatever, that he’s been in and these people try and torture him to get the answers out of him” |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Thought Mason would be controlling  and demanding – P2 likes Mason | “He would probably be quite a controlling  person” |
| P2 did not acknowledge the significance  of or recognise real historical figures and how they were presented in the game.  Recognised John F. Kennedy, was aware of assassination - documentary | “I think that’s like something from his past that  you don’t find out until the end or something” |
| Not sure about the point of the mission | “I don’t know what I’m doing… I didn’t really  know what was going on”  “I’m not really sure who I’m meant to be killing” “It’s quite annoying that it doesn’t tell you who to  stab” |
| Violence | Reacted to a character on screen being  dismembered with repulsion | “Oh God” |
| Described seeing a large group people  being gunned down in front of him as scary and realistic | “Scary… because you let them go first and they  all just get gunned down… not sure if that would happen in real life, probably could” |
| Stated that he enjoyed a carnage filled  section because he was avenging prisoners | “It’s nice to feel like you’re helping these people  to actually… survive because, before, none of these people would’ve been alive because they would be too scared to come out of that mine” |
| With reference to COD: MF2 – airport  section | “It’s pretty graphic to be honest, if someone  asked me to do that I probably wouldn’t do that” |
| Asked what he thought of US killing  Osama bin Laden | “I think it’s brilliant because obviously he caused  9/11” |
| Main thing that makes the Army scary | “Dying, getting killed. Because no-one really  wants to get killed until they’ve lived their life to like an age that they think, yeah I’m OK to die” |
| Role of a  soldier | Described how the game makes the role  of a soldier difficult and hazardous | “It’s not easy… it’s hard because if you make one  mistake, that’s it, you’re done” |
| Discussed news story about dead British | “Anything in the Army is good because you’re |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | soldier | serving your country well” |
| To civilise the world - unsuccessfully | “There’s wars everywhere , and then you just  hear that all the time people are being killed, from our soldiers that are trying to sort out and civilise all this war but it just doesn’t work […] there’s too much war for anyone to, like stop it”  “This war (*Afghanistan*) has been going on for so long that more and more people are going there to try and stop it but they never, they probably do negotiate with the people, but going in there to fight a war is making more war”  “I know the USA Government and our Government […] they talk to people, I know that, I think they do, like try and negotiate with them. But then in these countries […] I don’t think they listen” |
| Asked what he thought the role of  soldier is in real life | “To go into a war […] their fight is to kill  enemies, to stop them from overpowering your army”  “The main soldiers, it’s their job to kill, not the foundation (*those in charge*)”  “A soldier’s job is to kill all the enemies as many as they can”  “It’s not as easy as it sounds because you could be in a war for 10 minutes and die” |
| Asked how he would feel to fulfil that  role – considered joining Army Cadets | “It would be scary but, to be honest with you, I  wouldn’t mind being a soldier because […] you’re doing a good job for your country […] instead of being like an office worker, I know if you’re an office worker you’re doing something for your family or whatever, but to be in an army you’re doing something good that will benefit the whole country” |
| The enemy | Described as brutal | “Brutal because they’re axing people, it’s very  harsh. Like if you were in the war you wouldn’t spend your time axing people, you’d probably just kill them, like shoot them with a gun” |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Commented that they seem inferior to  the player’s team | “They’re not like, that well trained”  “I don’t think any proper war would be like this because now everyone’s got like… sentry guns and like we’ve got all new stuff. So this is kind of replicating… what it would be like in the old  wars maybe. Maybe a war in a place where there’s not as many developed… guns”  “Maybe it’s not a developed place, maybe the country’s just not the richest so it can’t really afford all the fancy weapons”  “I’m surprised, whoever these people are, don’t have tanks, because Russia’s like a pretty big place for war”  “This looks like it’s recent times but over in Russia, maybe that’s like a poor part but, in war, it never looks modern day because everything is blown up”  Real life – “America are more advanced than other countries” |
| Discussed how people often turn against  you in Call of Duty franchise | “Sometimes you can almost read what happens  before it does, some of the people, they don’t look very good, they look dodgy […] they look very dodgy and they sound very dodgy […] they have like a bit of an accent, they’re probably dodgy”  “In war games, if they’ve got a Russian accent they’re probably not a very good person” |
| With reference to the real Al-Qaeda | “If they found the main group of Al-Qaeda […] if  they managed to stop that, it would stop the war or bring it to a less dramatic state. That would have more of an effect than going and killing loads of soldiers” |
| The player’s  side | Thought some people were CIA  because of what they were wearing | “I think it’s the CIA because they’re all wearing  suits and glasses” |
| Television | Likes CSI (crime drama) |  |
| Watches news when it’s on – interested  in war news – described story of soldier killed in Afghan and repatriated | “It’s quite sad for the family and everything, like  he’s going out to do something good and then he just gets killed” |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Movies | Likes action and war – seen Die Hard,  James Bond, Olympus has Fallen – asked why he thought the White House was targeted not No 10 Downing Street | 10 Downing Street is just one house where the  Prime Minister lives, in the White House, the leader of the free world right, Barack Obama lives there but no only does he live there but all this […] his conference rooms and everything, where the CIA and the FBI, all these private investigating teams, they’re pretty much based there almost. 10 Downing Street’s pretty much just where he’ll make a decision on tax payment”  “They stopped Bin Laden, we stopped a double- dip recession”  “All these films, they show all these big like rooms with all this technology […] I pretty much get this off of news and films […] you never see a film where people all gather in 10 Downing Street to like kill of this most wanted man in the world”  “It’s always in America because I think they’ve got such an effective Government […] pretty much anything they can have to influence stopping war and everything, is just a bigger influence really […] they’ve got more advanced technology they are richer” |
| Family  influence | Asked what he thinks his Mum feels  about the Army | “She probably wouldn’t like anyone in her family  to go into it […] I think she probably thinks yeah, they’re doing such an amazing job but she’d be too scared to let me go into the Army” |
| Asked if he would listen to her | “I probably would listen to her” |
| Asked if Mum ever talks about  Afghanistan | “She gets annoyed at the news when you find out,  when you see something that is so obvious that even you could figure out” |
| Military  Advertising | Described one he sees all the time from  the Navy. | “You learn, you fight, you shoot, yeah those ones,  I see them all the time. They look interesting but at the same time they look like really scary” |
| Asked if there was one in particular that  he thought was really scary | “When they’re talking about, you learn, you fight  […] and it gets really fast, it’s like the bits where you’re like, ah a speedboat and this guy’s got a massive gun and he’s shooting everything. That’s |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | just like, in an instant your could be gone” |
|  | Asked what he thought Navy ad said  about role of a soldier | “It’s very serious, there’s no times where you can  really slack off because the whole time you’re just out there to stop this war and everything”  “It’s all about learning what to do and doing your job well”  “You’re out there to fight a war, not to fix a car […] if your job is a soldier, you don’t become a mechanic, you’re a soldier” |
| Asked how advert made him feel about  joining the Navy | “It kind of puts some reality into your thought  because you think, yeah I’m going to join the Army and I’m going to go serve well, you never know, you might not be needed in the Army, you could just become a mechanic, but obviously there is going to be a time when soldiers are needed. So it makes me think, do I really want to do it? Because it does look so scary and everything […] once you’re dead, you’re dead” |

**Appendix J: Participant 3 Coding Table**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Theme** | **Comments** | **Key Quotes** |
| Realism | Graphics make it more realistic | “The graphics are a lot better, it’s a lot more  realistic” |
| Online, soldiers dressed realistically, how  he would imagine real soldiers to dress | “They’ve got realistic suits and stuff” |
| Asked how he thought online experience  compared to real war | “I think it’s quite realistic […] like all the  weapons and stuff, they’re quite realistic. I’d also say the towns and stuff” |
| Asked how he would feel to play for real | “I think it would be quite scary, obviously on  this you don’t take it as seriously, but in real life you would have to slowly walk around, you wouldn’t just be rushing around, otherwise you’d be getting killed […] I’d say you’d all have to stay together as well” |
| Single player more realistic – felt different  playing this mode | “They like check every room and things and  they’re a lot more like calmer”  “You’re a lot more wary of thing, like you have |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | to like, look around and stuff because you don’t  really know what’s going to happen” |
| Asked how he thought game compared to  what a real soldier would have to do | “I think it’s quite realistic to be fair, I think  they’d maybe go around in more groups because there’s quite a lot of the other people […] but yeah, apart from that I think it’s pretty realistic” |
| Context | Was not aware of online map’s location in  the world |  |
| Was not really aware of who’s side he was  on or who he was fighting (online) |
| Said story mode is confusing |
| Role of a  soldier | Asked what he thought the online game  said about the role of a soldier | “They have to like lead their team and stuff”  “It depends on what mode you are playing” |
| Asked what single player said about the  job/role of a soldier | “He’s got to complete a mission but stick  together, like look out for himself and his team” |
| Asked what his character would say about  his actions | “He’s not doing it because he likes it […] he  kind of has to to serve his country” |
| The enemy | What sets apart good guys from bad guys | “I’m not sure really, you can just sort of tell  because they started it” |
| Television | Sometimes watches the news – anything  that’s interesting |  |
| Has seen Ross Kemp in Afghanistan –  wasn’t sure who they are fighting or what they have done | “They’re just fighting for their country and stuff  and putting themselves at risk for like us and fighting against the other people” |
| Asked to compare Ross Kemp to COD | “I think this (*the game*) is a lot more exaggerated  […] on Ross Kemp it’s like a lot more serious […] yeah that’s (*the game*) a lot more exaggerated now thinking about it” |
| Asked what Ross Kemp says about the role  of a soldier | “That they’ve got to go out and put themselves  at risk like every day and they’ve committed to that job” |
| Asked if it was something he might like to  do | “Maybe, I think it’s like good, it sounds all  good, but then the killing part. Like, you hear all the stories of people going, not mental, but like getting all… when they finish it they have all flashbacks of killing people and stuff. I don’t think that would be that good” (Seen on Ross |
| Equally worried about being shot as killing  other people |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | Kemp) |
| Movies | Likes all sorts of movies, specifically  mentioned Saving Private Ryan | “It’s quite good because some of them are quite  brave and then I think there’s one person who’s quite scared […] it shows you like the variety of people, like different types of people that are scared and stuff. |
| Military  Advertising | Seen some online and on telly | “They’re quite good to like, because I think  people would click on it to look. Because my brother’s friend, he wanted to go in the Army and then he got all the way through it and then saw a video of someone getting blown up and then he dropped out” |
| Asked what he thought they said about  soldiers’ job | “You can’t really go in with doubts, like are you  going to like it, you’ve just got to commit” |
| Family  influence | Asked what Mum thought of the Army.  Would he listen to her? | “She said that she would never let me go into it”  “It depends what I wanted to do”  “I can see where she’s coming from sort of thing. Because read about all like people getting shot and killed and things” |
| Asked if there was anything that would  make him ignore his Mum | “If people didn’t have anything […] like if they  didn’t have a lot of family and stuff, then maybe, because like they haven’t really got anything to come back to” |
| Friends | Friends play games – what do they think  about the Army?  Jack similar to friends | “I wouldn’t say they think about the Army. They  don’t, to be fair, thinking about it now, people don’t actually think about it like that, they just play the game […] really because it’s fun”  “Maybe when they get older they’ll think differently […] obviously when you’re younger you’re scared of more things but when you get older you’re not” |
| Main  influence | Killing and death | “No matter what the game does […] because the  game’s not really real but when you’re actually thinking to yourself that you’ve got to go out there and do it, it’s a different story”  “You’re going out there to kill people […] if that part weren’t in the Army I’d join it really” |

**Appendix K: Participant 4 Coding Table**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Themes** | **Comments** | **Key Quotes** |
| Realism | Thought it was more realistic than COD  gameplay wise | “On Call of Duty, you know, you’ve got your  guns and then you’ve probably got better graphics, but on this you can actually get in a vehicle […] you can actually like blow up some walls and stuff – so you chuck a grenade at it or you shoot a rocket launcher at it and if you have like a big turret you can completely destroy a barricade”  “It gives you sort of what it would feel like to be like in the Army, like it gives you a bit more of an in depth than Call of Duty […] the sounds of the bullets going past you and stuff as well” |
| Asked what he thought about dragging a  wounded soldier to safety | “I think that’s what they would do, they  wouldn’t just leave someone behind […] all of the battle scenes are really quite realistic” |
| About sniping in the game | “The good thing about this game as well is  that when you’ve got a sniper the bullet will drop just like in real life it would” |
| Sniping in real life – think it’s hard? | “Oh definitely because you’ve got to get… I  mean people say the Army’s like […] some people might say you really don’t need any qualifications but you’re going to need to know your angles and stuff if you’re going to be a sniper” |
| Pinned down by a sniper, how would you  feel for real? | “Well I’d be really worried and I’d just… I  don’t know what I’d do, I mean I’d probably panic. I couldn’t do this” |
| During a particularly intense firefight | “This just shows how intense everything gets” |
| The enemy | Asked who he was fighting | “They’re bad guys, they’re terrorist I think”  “I think they’re just terrorists” |
| Asked if he thought there were good guys  and bad guys | “Definitely, I mean you can tell who’s a  terrorist and who’s not” |
| Context | Wasn’t sure of point of mission | “I’m not really sure what I’m meant to be  doing here” |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Role of a  soldier | In the game | “You’ve got to not crack under pressure,  you’ve got to be fast, you’ve got to be fast at acting and you’ve got to concentrate as well. If you make one mistake you can mess up and die”  “They’re there to just like try and stop what’s happening […] they’re in a different country trying to keep their country safe” |
| Asked if he thought this was similar to the  real life Army | “Yeah because if it weren’t for them […]  they’re going to find out how terrorists are getting into the country and how they’re getting the bombs in and stuff” |
| Asked if he could do their job | “No because I panic under pressure” |
| “America was founded for terrorists by  terrorists” | “Anyone could be a terrorist like, it’s just  what their opinions are like. We terrorise them by doing whatever they’re upset about like, so they’re just, I don’t really know to be honest”  “You can be seen as like a terrorist by… they’ve invaded their country so that might be their form of terrorism” |
| Commented when sent to disarm a bomb | “So this is obviously what Army people  would do, anything […] If they don’t follow their orders they’re going to get a right bollocking” |
| On brutal hand-to-hand combat section | “It sort of shows what people in the Army go  through everyday” |
| Asked what he thought his character would  say about his situation | “He seems really confused about what’s going  on and he would be worried. That situation would scare just about anyone. He would just be absolutely shaken up by this but he’s a soldier so he would just continue on with his duty as he’s meant to” |
| Television | Watches the news in the morning | “Whenever a soldier dies there’s a news flash” |
| Asked how he feels when he sees news of  dead soldier – how does it make him feel about a soldier’s job? | “Just happy that none of my family are in that  situation and stuff but I also feel like sad for the people who have to deal with that”  “Life-threatening but your squad would probably grow as a family like while you’re out there because I saw like this thing, this woman, she was a medic, one of her squad |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | members was shot, he was on a building, he  got shot in the head and they were under heavy fire. She went up there, patched his head up and took the bullet out and she saved him and dragged him back to a Jeep or a helicopter” |
| Movies | Seen a couple of war/action movies but  couldn’t name them |  |
| Military  Advertising | Has seen Air Force "One click of a button  could save millions of lives" and Navy "A life without limits" | “It sort of shows that it’s interesting and you’ll  make a load of friends and stuff. But it’s risky, like if you get stationed in a submarine that’s one thing that I would hate” |
| Compared to Battlefield 3 | “I think it’s different because Battlefield 3 is  like made up, it’s not based on a real thing but it can give you an inside look on what’s happening. But in the Army adverts and stuff, it doesn’t really show you the actual fighting you will do. It will tell you but it won’t show you what will actually do really” |
| How he felt about a career in the military  after seeing adverts | “It could be interesting but it’s really  dangerous […] the people who join it either like the look of it or want to help out their country or something” |
| Family | How his Mum and Dad feel about the  military | “My Mum and Dad would respect the people  that go in hugely but they would hate it if me, my brothers, went into the Army. They wouldn’t like it at all”  About his Mum – “I think she thinks exactly the same as what most people think, that they’re just trying to look after their family at home and stuff” |
| Asked whether he agrees/would listen to his  Mum | “Yeah, I have no interest in doing it” Asked  where that stems from “One of my biggest fears is dying, I want to live as long as I possibly can […] going into battle I’d hate but all the training you’d go through I think would be quite enjoyable, like doing all the crawling through the mud and stuff like that sort of bit would be really interesting. But it’s the bit where you’re actually going into battle like, you’d be frightened in the battle but the bit  that would really… I’d really hate, say you |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | were in a helicopter just before it, flying over  […] just thinking about what’s going to happen” Asked what he’s thinking of when imagining being in helicopter “I imagine it like one of the maps I’ve seen in Call of Duty, it’s like, it’s a big city and it’s just completely destroyed and it’s that but just imagine people fighting and just explosions going off and stuff” |
| School | Learns about Remembrance Sunday | “Don’t forget the people that… if it weren’t  for them you wouldn’t be here today or your life would be completely different […] right now we could all be speaking German or something” |

**Appendix L: Participant 5 Coding Table**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Themes** | **Comments** | **Key Quotes** |
| The enemy | Asked if he thought there were good guys  and bad guys in the game | “Yeah especially in the campaign because  they’ve let out map packs which like you can play and there’s villain map packs and like hero ones” |
| Asked if he knew why the Makarov killed  people in airport in MW2 | “It doesn’t really tell you why, well it sort of  does but like it’s like a story sort of thing… I can’t remember” |
| Asked if he knew who they were, said  Federation, not sure where they’re from |  |
| Asked if he knew where Makarov was from | “I think he’s like Russian, or something like  that” |
| The  player’s side | Asked what he thought made Soap a good  guy | “Because on MW2 you could change to him  (*Makarov*) and you would go through the airport just killing random people. Whereas if you were Soap you would be protecting the people trying to kill him” |
| The job of  a soldier | Asked what he thought the game said about  the job of a soldier | “They’re trying to save, save the world from  the people that came to the ship […] they need to like risk their lives and stuff like that” |
| Asked how felt about soldiers risking their  lives for real | “I think they need to be brave, that would be  quite scary to do that” |
| Asked how he would feel to be in the game | “I wouldn’t want to be having to do what they |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | for real | need to do […] like carry all guns and like  people betraying you and stuff like that” |
| Asked what he thought his character would  say about his actions if real | “I think that he would be thinking that he’s  trying to save… he’d feel like he’s the good guy so he’s trying to save all the people from these people that he’s trying to kill” |
| Realism | Said game was more realistic than other  COD titles | “On MW2 you’d have, you’d be able to take  about , get shot about half a round which is about 15 bullets, whereas on this you’d die in about 7 or 8 bullets. In single player you get a lot more health” |
| Asked if game resembled what he imagined  real war to be like | “I could see it being like that if you would say  they only let you have one life, because you can regenerate, everyone just runs around. But if you were only to have one life I can sort of see it being more realistic” |
| Thought campaign was more realistic than  online | “On this they’re like actually being like how  the Army probably would” |
| Asked how he would feel if UK was invaded  like USA in the game | “I’d be pretty scared because in WW2 or  something, all the kids got separated from their Mums and Dads” |
| TV | Likes comedy, South Park, Family Guy,  doesn’t watch news/sometimes 90 second update on BBC Three |  |
| Movies | Likes movies like Troy, watching My Boy  Jack at school - boring | “Well he was just a normal person and he went  to war like everyone else and he died, so if you go you could just die” |
| Internet | Goes on Youtube mainly gaming channels  for COD and Fifa |  |
| Military  Advertising | Seen one for RAF Reserves | “Because it’s the adverts I don’t pay attention  really, I usually fast forward or get a drink” |
| Family | Mum and Dad don’t talk about the Army but  wouldn’t want him to join | “Yeah, because I wouldn’t really want to join  it anyway” |
| School | Learning about Lord Kitchener WW1  recruitment | “I think he was doing bad because he was  saying it was all good” |
| Radio | Here’s about war in Afghanistan on radio  when Mum puts it on in the car | “I remember there was this one person […] he  got an award for killing four people when he was all alone or something like that […] he saved loads of people […] that was pretty |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | cool” |
| Friends | All play similar games but never talk about  Army |  |

**Appendix M: Participant 6 Coding Table**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Themes** | **Comments** | **Key Quotes** |
| Violence | When asked what it was he liked about the  campaign | “I just like shooting” |
| Realism | Commenting on how it takes less bullets to  die online than on other COD titles | “I’d say it’s definitely more realistic because in  real life it would be one bullet and then maybe like another to finish them […] yeah it’s definitely a lot more realistic” |
| Thought story was unrealistic | “I’m not really too sure if you would actually be  allowed to shoot as many people as you are […] in each campaign there’s this one enemy and he’s got like a whole army, he’s got so many. I’m not really because at no point do you capture one to try and get answers and find out where this man is. You just have to shoot everyone and keep on following the rest of your team. It wouldn’t be this easy” |
| Asked how he would feel to be in the game  for real | “I would be so scared because all it is is one  shot and you’re dead” |
| Discussed soldiers playing these games | “I don’t know if they should be allowed to play  it really because […] because this is a lot easier than what it is in real life so it would give them kind of the mental state that they think it’s going to be a lot easier than it actually is”  “Maybe they let them play because it gives them more confidence going in so maybe none of them will back out” |
| Asked how the game makes him feel about  the idea of going into battle | “It doesn’t seem too bad when you think about it  except from the amount of times that you die in this game […] you die quite a lot so it would make me a bit worried I guess” |
| The enemy | Good guys, bad guys? Thought that because  player plays as the Ghosts, they must be the good guys. | “I think the Ghosts are the good guys and they  have to work as a team to defend off the bad guys like the Federation” |
| Asked who he was fighting in single player | “I’m not sure who the enemies are, I guess |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | mission | we’re against kind of everyone else” |
| The  role/job of a soldier | Asked what online game says | “I don’t really think it would be like this in a  soldier’s job. Say if they go to Afghanistan or whatever, I don’t really think it would be like this in a soldier’s job”  “In a way it just seems a bit unrealistic not matter how hard they try to make it realistic” |
| Different in campaign | “Yeah, because you have missions […] you get  dropped off by helicopters into different places […] you have team mates, people who tell you orders […] I guess that’s more realistic than having teammates who can’t talk to you [… that makes it more like what actually goes on in a soldier’s life” |
| Asked about similarities and differences  between in game and real life – his opinion | “There are definitely a few of each, like going  off for different missions and returning back to the military base, it’s quite similar to, I guess, what they would do in the actual Military. Maybe it’s quite different because if you’re dead then you’re dead and you can’t come back whereas in this, you just keep on respawning” |
| TV | Likes comedy and anything that’s  interesting |  |
| Sometimes hears news on radio in the car –  rarely about Afghanistan | “I think it’s good that we’re helping other  countries but I’m not sure if it will end when we go because I think they’ll just take advantage of the fact that we’re gone and maybe it will just increase kind of the flare for the Afghanistan people to do it more” |
| Reading | Likes to read, currently reading a book  called Black Friday about a young boy who has to stop a terrorist attack. |  |
| Internet | Mainly Youtube, watching gaming clips  and comedy |  |
| Military  advertising | Seen one for Airforce online – couldn’t  remember words used | “The words made you kind of, you wanted to  find out what the next word was and then it would all lead up to it saying like Air force, join the Air force now or whatever […] when I first saw the advert I wasn’t really sure what it was advertising, because the way they did it at the beginning didn’t really make it obvious that they |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | were recruiting”  “It didn’t really make me think anything really” |
| Family | Dad not keen | “He’s not very keen on it, he’s never spoken  about it anyway. Like we won’t really watch films on like military and stuff, unless their like action packed because he likes action packed films” |
| What would Mum and Dad say if he  wanted to join the Army | “I think they’d be very supportive actually  because I’d be the first one in the family” |
| School | In primary school had two visits from Army  recruiters – learned about WW2 dictators at school | “They didn’t really mention any negatives, just  focused in the pros. They said it was life changing. They talked about how it improves all of your skills, it makes you stronger, braver and socially better and they train you”  “It definitely made me interested about joining knowing that it would improve all of my skills” |
| Asked if he had considered a career in the  Army | “I have, I have a bit but I guess I haven’t really  thought about any job much yet” |
| Friends | Most of his friends play COD or similar,  two want to join the RAF | “I think it’s definitely good, from what they’ve  said it sounds like quite a lot of fun to drive around in a plane” |

**Appendix N: Participant 7 Coding Table**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Theme** | **Comments** | **Key Quotes** |
| Realism | Graphics make it more realistic | “The graphics are a lot better, it’s a lot more  realistic” |
| Online, soldiers dressed realistically, how  he would imagine real soldiers to dress | “They’ve got realistic suits and stuff” |
| Asked how he thought online experience  compared to real war | “I think it’s quite realistic […] like all the  weapons and stuff, they’re quite realistic. I’d also say the towns and stuff” |
| Asked how he would feel to play for real | “I think it would be quite scary, obviously on  this you don’t take it as seriously, but in real life you would have to slowly walk around, you wouldn’t just be rushing around, otherwise you’d be getting killed […] I’d say you’d all have to stay together as well” |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Single player more realistic – felt different  playing this mode | “They like check every room and things and  they’re a lot more like calmer”  “You’re a lot more wary of thing, like you have to like, look around and stuff because you don’t really know what’s going to happen” |
| Asked how he thought game compared to  what a real soldier would have to do | “I think it’s quite realistic to be fair, I think  they’d maybe go around in more groups because there’s quite a lot of the other people […] but yeah, apart from that I think it’s pretty realistic” |
| Context | Was not aware of online map’s location in  the world |  |
| Was not really aware of who’s side he was  on or who he was fighting (online) |
| Said story mode is confusing |
| Role of a  soldier | Asked what he thought the online game  said about the role of a soldier | “They have to like lead their team and stuff”  “It depends on what mode you are playing” |
| Asked what single player said about the  job/role of a soldier | “He’s got to complete a mission but stick  together, like look out for himself and his team” |
| Asked what his character would say about  his actions | “He’s not doing it because he likes it […] he  kind of has to to serve his country” |
| The enemy | What sets apart good guys from bad guys | “I’m not sure really, you can just sort of tell  because they started it” |
| Television | Sometimes watches the news – anything  that’s interesting |  |
| Has seen Ross Kemp in Afghanistan –  wasn’t sure who they are fighting or what they have done | “They’re just fighting for their country and stuff  and putting themselves at risk for like us and fighting against the other people” |
| Asked to compare Ross Kemp to COD | “I think this (*the game*) is a lot more exaggerated  […] on Ross Kemp it’s like a lot more serious […] yeah that’s (*the game*) a lot more exaggerated now thinking about it” |
| Asked what Ross Kemp says about the role  of a soldier | “That they’ve got to go out and put themselves  at risk like every day and they’ve committed to that job” |
| Asked if it was something he might like to  do | “Maybe, I think it’s like good, it sounds all  good, but then the killing part. Like, you hear all |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Equally worried about being shot as killing  other people | the stories of people going, not mental, but like  getting all… when they finish it they have all flashbacks of killing people and stuff. I don’t think that would be that good” (Seen on Ross Kemp) |
| Movies | Likes all sorts of movies, specifically  mentioned Saving Private Ryan | “It’s quite good because some of them are quite  brave and then I think there’s one person who’s quite scared […] it shows you like the variety of people, like different types of people that are scared and stuff. |
| Military  Advertising | Seen some online and on telly | “They’re quite good to like, because I think  people would click on it to look. Because my brother’s friend, he wanted to go in the Army and then he got all the way through it and then saw a video of someone getting blown up and then he dropped out” |
| Asked what he thought they said about  soldiers’ job | “You can’t really go in with doubts, like are you  going to like it, you’ve just got to commit” |
| Family  influence | Asked what Mum thought of the Army.  Would he listen to her? | “She said that she would never let me go into it”  “It depends what I wanted to do”  “I can see where she’s coming from sort of thing. Because read about all like people getting shot and killed and things” |
| Asked if there was anything that would  make him ignore his Mum | “If people didn’t have anything […] like if they  didn’t have a lot of family and stuff, then maybe, because like they haven’t really got anything to come back to” |
| Friends | Friends play games – what do they think  about the Army?  Jack similar to friends | “I wouldn’t say they think about the Army. They  don’t, to be fair, thinking about it now, people don’t actually think about it like that, they just play the game […] really because it’s fun”  “Maybe when they get older they’ll think differently […] obviously when you’re younger you’re scared of more things but when you get older you’re not” |
| Main  influence | Killing and death | “No matter what the game does […] because the  game’s not really real but when you’re actually thinking to yourself that you’ve got to go out there and do it, it’s a different story”  “You’re going out there to kill people […] if that |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | part weren’t in the Army I’d join it really” |

**Appendix O: Participant 8 Coding Table**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Themes** | **Comments** | **Key Quotes** |
| Realism | Thought that the maps were realistic |  |
| Likes the realistic guns |  |
| Likes sniping – asked if he thought it would  be difficult to be a sniper in real life | “Yeah because it’s easier to have a steady hand  on this as well and in real life I’d be rubbish” |
| Asked how close the online experience is to  what he imagined real war to be like | “It could be similar but you can tell it’s not  similar. You can tell there’s aspects of it that can be, like you would have a lot more control  in a real war I reckon […] but I guess at some  points it could be like it”  “Like if you get ambushed or something, that could be similar because on this you don’t  really know what’s around you so that could be similar to a real war” asked how that made him  feel about idea of real war “I can imagine how much more tense it would be because on this  it’s not actually your life, it’s a game, but if it was real life the tension would be like so much more” |
| Thought campaign was more realistic than  online | “This is a lot more like realistic because than  online because it has a proper storyline and there’s something more to fight for rather than  just killing” |
| Asked what he liked about the single player  gameplay | “If you think about like the UK Government  and stuff and actual like secret missions, this is sort of what you could imagine it as […] so it’s  believable and makes it more tense” |
| Asked how he felt about army going on  secret missions we don’t know about | “Although we don’t really know what the  secret missions are, this (*the game*) sort of shows us” |
| Asked how he would feel to be in a firefight  for real | “I probably wouldn’t even shoot, probably try  and hide. It depends because you could never know what you would actually do but if I was  in the Army and I had the training it might be  different. I watched, I think it was Band of Brothers or something, but there was one guy who just didn’t shoot anybody because he was so scared just to kill somebody”  “I’d be scared, so scared, I wouldn’t really know what to do” |
| The enemy | Asked if there were good guys and bad guys | “Yeah, it’s best to be the Ghosts, that’s like the  main thing about the game, the Ghosts […] because I think on the campaign you’re the Ghosts and sort of their whole missions, you’re part of the Ghosts” |
| Didn’t know why the Federation were the  bad guys |  |
| Asked if he thought enemies across Call of  Duty titles had similar characteristics | “They’re all similar because they’re doing  something bad and you have to stop them” |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Role of a  soldier | Asked what character would say about his  job if real (online) | “Scary, because I’m not exactly being… sort of  running about so…” |
| Asked what character’s main aim was within  the game | “To kill as many opposition as possible […]  not to get killed” |
| Asked if game was similar to what he  thought a real soldier’s job would be | “Yeah I guess so but, yeah because you don’t  want to get killed, that’s probably more important than killing as many people as possible in the real job” |
| Asked if he thought it was a good thing that  the army might be doing things that we don’t know about | “Well it depends on the actual situation because  sometimes there’s certain things that the public can’t know otherwise, they need it to be a  secret to actually like… say about Osama bin  Laden or something, you could say that they needed to keep quite a lot of stuff about that secret” |
| Movies | Has seen Green Zone with Matt Damon  finding a terrorist – asked if he knew what the terrorist had done | “There was sort of a group fighting against the  US Army one of sort of the leaders of that group and just planning terrorist attacks” |
| Asked how fighting in Green Zone made  him feel about being in warzone for real – same thoughts about Band of Brothers but the characters are a lot more realistic, better because main people die | “There were scenes in it where you could  imagine it happening in real life, like he fired a gun I think like next to another guy and it made him deaf and there’s quite a lot of injuries and outcomes that are similar to what people have heard of before, so it relates to all real life situations”  “It’s a good film because it relates it to real life like quite a lot”  “There was characters that would be similar to  me and seemed quite like scared and like lonely, so you’re there by yourself sort of thing.  When you look at it as the war like you’re not  actually in it, you say like ah it’s fun but when you’re there it seems quite scary and just nothing like you would think” |
| The News | Reads Metro watches on TV sometimes –  sees news of dead soldiers from Afghanistan | “It is upsetting, especially how they’d been  fighting for us and you don’t realise how bad the war is until people start dying” |
| Asked how this made him feel about the idea  of joining the Army | “Intimidating, because in like WW2 when they  sort of advertised the war they showed it as something fun, whereas now we know it’s not actually fun […] it’s different and you could get killed quite easily” Learned about WW2 adverts in history “You’re not a man if you don’t join up, you’re not a hero to your kids” |
| Military  advertising | Has seen quite a few | “The adverts are quite good because it makes  you, the people on the adverts seem quite special and like good so it sort of shows you what you could be yourself”  “It could make you want to join as well because they don’t show you the gory elements either,  they just show you like the adventure” |
| Asked how they made him feel about a  career in the military | “I don’t think I ever would but it is quite  interesting, it intrigues me like the different aspects of it, like the different roles […] there’s |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | so much you can do in the Army which is  interesting” |
| Felt fear of death/violence overrided his  intrigue | “Because on Call of Duty and stuff, you would  always be like oh yeah it would be so fun to go to war and just respawn but then like it’s not like that so you do actually know that you could easily die” |
| Family | Parents don’t talk about war, might support  him if he wanted to join |  |
| Auntie’s boyfriend in TA, can’t stand with  back to the door |  |

**Appendix P: Participant/Guardian Information Sheet**

### Participant Information Sheet The title of the research project

Misfire: An Exploration of the Military First-Person-Shooter video game genre as a UK Armed Forces

Recruitment Tool.

### Invitation

You are being invited to take part in a research project. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask us if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

### What is the purpose of the project?

The aim of the project is to explore 13-16 year old video gamers’ views of the military.

### Why have I been chosen?

You have been chosen because you are between the ages of 13 and 16 and regularly play video games.

### Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep (and be asked to sign a consent form) and you can still withdraw at any time. You do not have to give a reason.

### What do I have to do?/ what will happen to me if I take part?

The research involves a one hour interview. For the first half you will play your favourite first-person- shooter whilst I ask you questions about your thoughts and feelings about the game.

The second half will be a discussion of what you like to watch on TV, what films you like to watch, what websites you like to visit. There will also be questions about you parents’ views of the Army, and what you learn about at school.

### Will my taking part in this project be kept confidential?/ What will happen to the results of the research project?

All the information that I collect about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential. You will not be able to be identified in any reports or publications.

**Appendix Q: Participant Guardian Consent Form**

### Research Consent Form

**Full title of project:** Misfire: An Exploration of the Military First-Person-Shooter video game genre as a UK Armed Forces Recruitment Tool.

### Name, position and contact details of researcher:

Harry Toussaint

Phone no: 07717605562 Email: [hotoussaint@gmail.com](mailto:hotoussaint@gmail.com)

**Name, position and contact details of supervisor:** John Brissenden - Senior Lecturer In Public Relations Phone no: 01202 965809

Email: [jbrissenden@bournemouth.ac.uk](mailto:jbrissenden@bournemouth.ac.uk)

### Please Initial Here

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| I confirm that I have read and understood the participant information sheet for the above research project and have had the opportunity to ask questions. |  |
| I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving reason and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, should I not wish to answer any particular question(s), complete a test or give a sample, I am free to decline. |  |
| I give permission for members of the research team to have access to my anonymised responses. I understand that my name will not be linked with the research materials, and I will not be identified or identifiable in the report or reports |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| that result from the research. |  |
| I agree to take part in the above research project. |  |

Name of Participant Date Signature

Name of Parent/Guardian Date Signature

Name of Researcher Date Signature

*Once this has been signed by all parties the participant should receive a copy of the signed and dated participant consent form, the participant information sheet and any other written information provided to the participants. A copy of the signed and dated consent form should be kept with the project’s main documents which must be kept in a secure location.*

**Appendix R: Interview Guide**

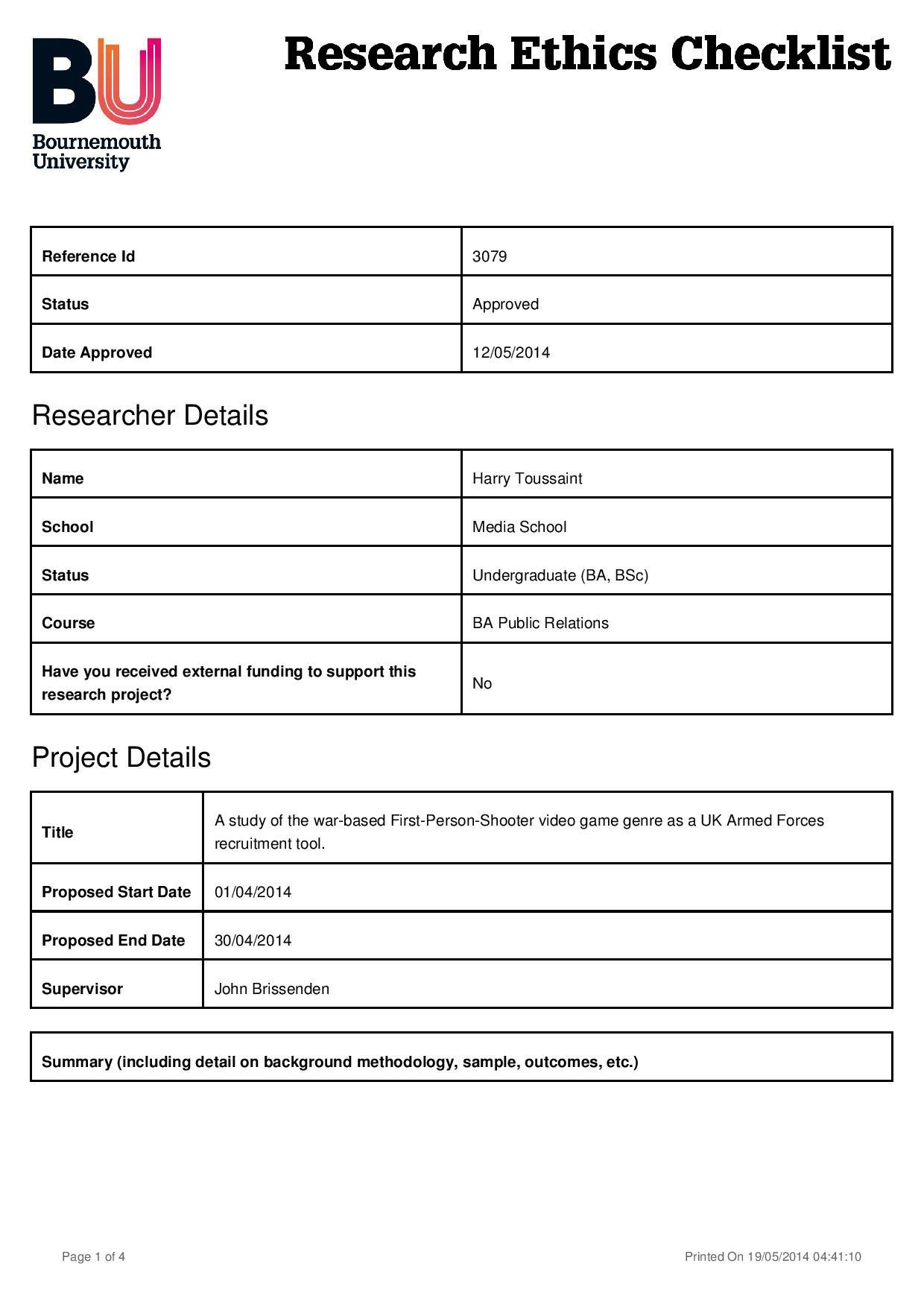
### Observation

* Tell me about a typical day for you.
  + What sort of games do you like to play?
  + How long would a typical gaming session last for you?
* I’d be really interested to find out more about what you think about COD etc. Would you like to pick your favourite one for us to play together?
  + What’s your favourite thing about this game?
  + What do you think is the worst thing about this game?
* *Playing game.*
  + If this character were real, what you do think he/she would say about their actions in the game?
* How do you feel about that?
* How close to a real war do you think this game is?

### Contextual Questions

* I’d now like to talk to you about what you watch on TV.
  + Tell about the sort of shows you watch.
  + Tell about the sort of movies you like to watch.
* What sort of things do you like to look at on the internet?
* Do you like to read? What sort of books/newspapers/magazines?
* Radio?
* Have you seen or heard any adverts for joining the Army/Navy/Air force?
* How would you say your Mum feels about the Army?
* How would you say your Dad feels about the Army?
* Can you give me an example of something your Mum/Dad has said about the Army?
* How do you feel about what your Mum/Dad feels/has said about the Army?
* How would you say your brothers feel about the Army?
* Do they teach you anything at school about the Army and what it does?
* Can you give me an example of something a teacher of yours has said about the Army?
* Do a lot of your friends play COD, Battlefield etc?
* How would you say your friends feel about the Army?

**Appendix S: Ethics Checklist**



There is extensive evidence of the UK and US Military collaborating with the video games industry to produce war-based First-Person-Shooter video games. There are also examples of this relationship producing video games with explicit purpose of boosting enlistment figures. This project will investigate 13-16 year old First-Person-Shoote r garners' perceptions of the military and their likelihood to enlist.This will be achieved through six in-depth interviews in a contextual inquiry format in which participants will be interview wh ilst playing their favourite war-based FPS. These will be accompanied by a week long media diary filled out by each interview participant.

External Ethics Review

Does your research require external review through the NHS National Research Ethics Service (NRES) or

No

through another external Ethics Committee?

Research Literature



Is your research solely literature based?

Human Participants

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Will your research project involve interaction with human participants as primary sources of data (e.g.  interview,observation, original survey)? | Yes |
| Does your research specifically involve participants who are considered vulnerable (i.e. children,those with cognitive impairment,those in unequal relationships-such as your own students,prison inmates, etc.)? | Yes |
| Is a DBS check check required? | No |
| Does the study involve participants age 16 or over who are unable to give informed consent (i.e.people with learning disabilities)? NOTE:All research that falls under the auspices of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 must be reviewed by NHS NRES. | No |
| Will the study require the co-operation of a gatekeeper for initial access to the groups or individuals to be recruited? (i.e. students at school,members of self-help group,residents of Nursing home?) | No |
| Will it be necessary for participants to take part in your study without their knowledge and consent at the  time (i.e. covert observation of people in non-public places)? | No |
| Will the study involve discussion of sensitive topics (i.e.sexual activity,drug use,criminal activity)? | Yes |

Are drugs,placebos or other substances (i.e.food substances,vitamins) to be administered to the study

No

participants or will the study involve invasive, intrusive or potentially harmful procedures of any kind?

Will tissue samples (including blood) be obtained from participants? Note:If the answer to this question No

Page 2 of 4 Printed On 19/05/2014 04:41:10



is 'yes' you will need to be aware of obligations under the Human Tissue Act 2004.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Could your research induce psychological stress or anxiety,cause harm or have negative consequences for the participant or researcher (beyond the risks encountered in normal life)? | No |
| Will your research involve prolonged or repetitive testing? | No |
| Will the research involve the collection of audio materials? | Yes |
| Is this audio collection solely for the purposes of transcribing/summarising and will not be used in any outputs (publication,dissemination,etc.) and will not be made publicly available? | Yes |
| Will your research involve the collection of photographic or video materials? | Yes |
| Will financial or other inducements (other than reasonable expenses and compensation for time) be offered to participants? | Yes |

Please explain below why your research project involves the above mentioned criteria (be sure to explain why the sensitive criterion is essential to your project's success).Give a summary of the ethicalissues and any action that will be taken to address these.Explain how you will obtain informed consent (and from whom) and how you will inform the participant(s) about the research project (i.e.participant information sheet). A sample consent

form and participant information sheet can be found on the Research Ethics website.

The involvement of participants who are considered vulnerable is crucial to the success of this research as the 13·16 year old age bracket is actively targeted by the UK military and makes up a large portion of the players of war-based FPSs. Written permission will be obtained from their parent or guardian.The interviews will involve the discussion of war and the military, therefore topics such as killing and death are likely to arise.This will be made perlectly clear to both parent and participant onthe consent form and participant sheet. However, this should not present any issues as parents or guardians have already consented to their children being exposed to these topics by allowing them to play these

games .The collection of both audio and video materialis crucialto the success of this research project as conclusions and discoveries may be drawn from linking what is on screen to what is being said. Participants and guardians will be informed through the consent form and participant information sheet that these will be used solely for transcribing and summarising.Due to the lengthy commitment of each participant,financialincentives in the form of vouchers will be utilised to ensure participation.

Final Review

Will you have access to personal data that allows you to identify individuals OR access to confidential

corporate or company data (that is not covered by confidentiality terms within an agreement or by a Yes separate confidentiality agreement)?

Please explain below why your research requires the collection of personal data.Describe how you will anonymize the personal data (if applicable).Describe how you will collect,manage and store the personal data (taking into consideration the Data Protection Act and the 8 Data Protection Principles). Explain how you will

Page 3 of 4 Printed On 19/05/2014 04:41:10

**obtain informed consent (and from whom) and how you will inform the participant about the research project** (i.e.

**participant information sheet).**

This research will require the collection of data relating to age, location, situation, media consumption and opinions on political issues such as the army and war in general. All of these are crucial in discovering to what extent war-based FPSs impact participants' likelihood to join the military. However, all of this data will be stored on an encrypted hard drive and destroyed on the conclusion of the research - all of which will be made clear on the parental consent form and participant information sheet.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Will your research involve experimentation on any of the following: animals, animal tissue, genetically modified organisms?** | No |
| **Will your research take place outside the UK (including any and all stages of research: collection, storage, analysis,etc.)?** | No |

**Please use the below text box to highlight any other ethical concerns or risks that may arise during your research that have not been covered in this form.**

Page 4 of 4 Printed On 19/05/2014 04:41:10