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Why are the most painted pixels the most painted?

r/place is all about communities coming together to create an art piece representative of themselves. This leads to many battles between communities for valuable real estate on the canvas. The most placed pixel in the r/place 2022 dataset is coordinate (0, 0). Why was (0, 0) the most placed pixel coordinate? The coordinate is in the top left corner of the canvas making it an easy to find location. Why is being easy to find important? Creating artwork in an easy to find location is valuable because users can more easily contribute to the artwork. Why is it important to have users easily contribute? Because to keep control of an area, you need more people placing pixels contributing or protecting an art piece than people destroying it. Why do people destroy previously created artwork? People want to bring attention to the online community that they belong to by creating an art piece representative of their community. Why is bringing attention to the community a big deal? Because r/place is a battle between different online communities to show off their dominance and popularity on the internet.

The second and third most placed pixels are (359, 564) and (349, 564). Why do these pixels have high place counts? These pixels have high place counts because they are the eyes of the straw hat pirates skull from the anime series One Piece. Why do people change the eyes of the skull? Because by changing the eyes, you change the entire character's identity. In this case by changing the eyes from fully black to including

a cyan/blue dot, the artwork now represents Sans, a skeleton character with blue eyes from a game called UnderTale. Why do people want to change the identity of the artwork? Because r/place is about expanding and taking over artwork representing one community and having it represent another community. Why didn't people fully replace the One Piece art with an art piece fully dedicated to Sans? Because to take over an art piece you need more people dedicated to changing an art piece than protecting it. Why were more people protecting the art piece than trying to change it? Because One Piece is one of the most popular anime shows with a very large fanbase. Whereas UnderTale is a smaller indie video game with a smaller community. Because of this, the undertale community focused on simply 2 pixels rather than trying to control hundreds. By doing this they can be represented without needing a large user base and control a large area.

Coordinates (0, 0) and the eyes of the straw hat pirates skull ((359, 564) and (349, 564)), became highly contested, leading to a large number of placements on those coordinates. These two locations became contested for different reasons. The fight over (0, 0) was about territorial dominance on a highly viewed location, while the battle over the eyes was about character identity and community expression.