Hate the player, not the game: Why did the Christchurch shooter’s video look like a game?

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Loading screen

One of the most remarkable circumstances of the Christchurch shooting incident was the fact that the gunman was able to livestream the first 17 minutes of the attack on the social media platform Facebook. The stream captured the gunman’s drive to the Al Noor Mosque until he left the mosque. Perhaps the most notable feature was the use of a first-person perspective achieved with the use of a head camera. For those familiar with video games, first-person perspective is a popular gaming cinematic device. The perspective is most often employed in games that involve guns and shooter-versus-shooter narratives. In effect, the gunman had intentionally replicated the look and feel of a popular mainstream video game genre. Further, the gunman casually referenced a popular internet personality who streams themselves playing games before exiting his vehicle to start the shooting.

The gunman had also concurrently shared a manifesto that supposedly described his motivations and beliefs. However, among the more overtly disturbing material were liberally scattered internet/gaming memes,
in-jokes and deliberately provocative, but otherwise nonsensical, text. Once again, the gunman had intentionally tied the shooting back to internet culture and video gaming. Indeed, the manifesto plays on this intersection by sarcastically claiming that violent video games caused the gunman to become the shooter. Many observers suggested that the manifesto was a deliberate joke or distraction perpetrated by the gunman on the public, media and authorities, leading others to question whether the gunman was genuinely motivated by the rhetoric being expressed or whether he was perpetrating a huge internet/gaming cultural joke (Macklin, 2019; Thomas, 2020; Wojtasik, 2020).

This leaves us with a question: why did the gunman go to such lengths to tap into internet and gaming culture? On the one hand, perhaps it is a huge internet/gaming cultural joke and the gunman was simply pulling off the biggest troll for fortune and glory in certain dark anonymous places of the internet (a form of intangible internet kudos). On the other hand, the gunman believed in the rhetoric he expressed and was using internet and gaming culture to tap into an audience. The link between the nebulous alt-right rhetoric expressed within video game meta-culture to shock and provoke (for the lulz), and the deadly serious alt-right rhetoric of the so-called true believers is difficult to distinguish. Was this a coincidence and the shooter was simply talking in the language he knew or was this a clever piece of marketing?

We also need to ask ourselves how much assistance the shooter received from the dark places of the internet. The dark places provided both the space and the tools for the shooter to communicate his message to an engaged audience. However, did he work alone or were there voices on the internet making suggestions, providing content, tacitly supporting his actions and anonymously fuelling his beliefs? Without an echo chamber full of conspiracy and disinformation, and in concert with a permissive environment for the promotion of hate, would the actions of the Christchurch shooter have been realised? Was the Christchurch shooter really a lone wolf or was there a pack behind his actions?

This chapter first introduces the myth of the lone, antisocial gamer, and subsequently uncovers the reality of the gaming industry and culture that surrounds it. The chapter then goes on to discuss how the industry and culture of gaming can be divided into the ‘good place’ and the ‘bad place’. Finally, the chapter concludes with a look at the shooter’s message, his intended end game and a discussion of what needs attention in the future.
The myth

There is an enduring mythos that surrounds the ‘gamer’ where the description of the typical gamer is that of the single white male aged in their late teens to early twenties, who is socially awkward and isolated and still lives with his parents or (worse) a single parent, typically a single mother (Zhang and Frederick, 2018). Often used as an epithet, ‘gamer’ has taken on a negative connotation from early in the cultural understanding of game play that lies outside traditional masculine pursuits of mainstream sports. Gaming was often given the narrative trope of being anti-jock, the opposite of the American high school/college quarterback – homecoming queen dream. This kind of meaning still pervades in many narratives with individuals often quick to distance themselves from the label ‘gamer’ when observed playing games (Curran, 2011).

This narrative of the anti-jock grew at first from pen-and-paper, dungeons-and-dragons style role-playing games that took place indoors and often took hours or days to play. Within the fantasy setting, players could become the heroes of their own story, wielding mighty powers and conquering fearsome enemies. Of course, with the fantasy setting came accusations of satanic influence. These games, which caused young people to disappear inside for hours and consort with demons, only further tarnished the image of ‘gamers’ in public perceptions. This would be a recurring issue with the moral outrage over games not disappearing (Martin and Fine, 1991; Waldron, 2005).

There was also a similar narrative in the public consciousness, a narrative of quiet young men who lived alone and kept mostly to themselves. In this narrative the quiet young men are the embodiment of the modern-day bogeyman, the serial killer. However, this narrative contains four pervasive myths about serial killers. It should firstly be noted that serial killers are exceedingly rare in society but remain a popular news media and entertainment topic, which helps to reinforce these myths. The first myth is that all serial killers are men. The second is that all serial killers are Caucasian. The third is that serial killers are isolated, dysfunctional loners. The fourth myth is that serial killers are either mentally ill or evil geniuses (Egger, 2002; Hodgkinson et al., 2017).

The crossover between these narratives is readily apparent. Both narratives draw on the outsider perspective of individuals with a strong focus on the gender and racial (note, not ethnic) aspects as well as the lonely isolated
loser–genius. Both narratives describe the gamer and the serial killer as white males who are intelligent but isolated from their peers. There is also, perhaps, an undercurrent of inflated ego and a sense of the world owing them something more, a kind of disregarded entitlement, the longing to be acknowledged as a genius or hero but being unrecognised by others and not being rewarded as such. In total, the ‘gamer’ narrative weaves together several outsider narratives to construct a single narrative discourse of the mad, bad and sad individual who plays games in isolation from mainstream society: an aberration rather than the norm.

There are claims that there are links between the violence portrayed in video games and the violence that plays out in the physical world. Person versus person (PvP) and person versus environment (PvE) shooter games remain a popular genre of video game (Jansz and Tanis, 2007). The genre remains simple in basic design terms with players being presented with targets (either player-controlled or computer-controlled, sometimes both), which they engage using a variety of weapons including firearms (Hullett and Whitehead, 2010). Claims of a link between violent video games and physical world violence are often brought up by the media when examining the narrative of younger shooters, for example, Columbine (Springhall, 1999). This is not a new phenomenon. It existed in other violent media before video games, for example, John Hinckley Jr (Skoler, 1998). This further feeds into the popular myth linking video games to negative personality traits.

It is easy to see where the Christchurch gunman – an individual with an anti-mainstream identity, withdrawn nature and obsession with the darker places of the internet who has demonstrated the capacity for violence, terror and mass murder (McGowan, 2020) – fits into this mythology. It is also easy to conjure the stereotypical monster described in the gamer/loner/serial killer narrative from the media-derived facts of the case. However, this is perhaps a reductive way of approaching the issue; while it gives some rationality to an irrational act, it ignores the actual reality of gaming, both good and bad.

The reality

The reality of gaming is in stark contrast to this narrative. The modern-day gamer is none of the things described in the previous narrative. For context, as an industry, gaming generated US$152.1 billion revenue
in 2019 and is forecast to hit US$196.0 billion by 2022 (Wijman, 2019). In comparison, movies generated a global box office revenue of US$42.5 billion in 2019 (McClintock, 2020). Gaming is big business. A recent report on the Australian gaming industry revealed that nine in 10 households contain at least one gaming device and at least two-thirds of the population play games. Further, 78 per cent of gamers are over the age of 18 with the average age being 34, and 42 per cent of those aged over 65 play. Forty-seven per cent of gamers are female. The average time per day spent playing games is 89 minutes for men and 71 minutes for women (Brand et al., 2019).

This paints a very different picture of what the typical gamer might look like. Gaming is much more widespread and embedded in the daily lives of individuals. With the rise of the personal computer and the internet, games moved from pen-and-paper to the keyboard-and-mouse. Games became increasingly complex and graphically more realistic as computers simultaneously increased in availability and decreased in price (Aarseth, 2013; Paul et al., 2012). The ubiquity of mobile devices and tablets has also led to an increase in access to games. Mobile gaming accounts for nearly half of the revenue generated by the gaming industry (Wijman, 2019). Even though most individuals fall into the category of casual gamers, they are still engaging with games in the same way that more ‘hard-core’ gamers are; there is simply a difference in scale.

Regarding video game violence and physical world violence, there are still several issues that surround these claims from many quarters. There are studies that link video games with increased aggression (Anderson et al., 2010; Engelhardt et al., 2011; Ferguson, 2007; Ferguson and Kilburn, 2009) though more recent studies call this link into question (Ferguson, 2011; Ferguson et al., 2016; Markey et al., 2015). In short, playing violent video games tends to elevate aggression and confrontational behaviour in the short term; however, this increase is balanced with evidence that cooperative games with violent content can encourage prosocial team building (Greitemeyer and Cox, 2013). The take home is that getting shot at repeatedly tends to make you nervous. Also, for most people the effects are only short term and end relatively quickly once the game play has come to an end.

There is also a definitional issue: it should be noted that the established links are to elevated aggression and not violence. This is an important distinction to make; we can see that all violence is aggression but not all
aggression is violent. While this may seem to be arguing semantics, the distinction is important, as there remains no solid evidence linking violence in video games to increased physical world violence. At worst, video games may be seen to elevate the risk of violent responses to provocation rather than be directly linked (Anderson et al., 2010). There is also no clear evidence that the violence in video games desensitises adults to physical world violence (Szycik et al., 2017).

Much of the research focuses on children and adolescent players, which is understandable as this is the group that is perceived to be the most vulnerable and, to an extent, also represents the ‘mythical’ gamer in people’s minds. Within this group, the link to aggression is considered problematic, and there have been steps with ratings and parental controls to limit the exposure of younger gamers to more problematic content (Huesmann, 2007; Hunter Jr et al., 2010; O’Holleran, 2010). In addition, the research indicates that there is more at play than perhaps simply exposure to violence (Ferguson and Olson, 2014). There is ongoing uncertainty about the role that video games play when accounting for the entire set of circumstances and social milieu of the individual. Underlying psychological predispositions to violence may be elevated by video games in both youths and adults, though this is perhaps a side effect of the anxiety and aggressive affect induced in the short term by the game genre (Gentile et al., 2014; Hasan et al., 2012).

While for the normal adult the link between video game violence and physical world violence is not readily apparent, it does exist for small sections of the population who have an underlying predisposition towards violence. The real question is, which comes first, the video game or the predisposition? It would be logical to understand a person with some predisposition towards violence accessing games that are violent as this would allow them to indulge in such violence (Anderson et al., 2010). In a similar way that an ice hockey fan would be attracted to playing an ice hockey simulation, a person with an attraction to shooting may choose to play a game that involves shooting. So, in this way, the myth of the violent serial killing ‘gamer’ is a somewhat of a self-fulfilling prophecy: those individuals with a predisposition towards violence will naturally be attracted to violent video games. Whether video games contribute to negative outcomes or promote ‘gamer’ deviance is unclear.
Additionally, there is a growing meta-culture surrounding games that incorporates discussion of in-game, in-character cultures and out-of-game, out-of-character cultures concerned with how to play the game (meta-gaming). By extension, this meta-culture further incorporates other aspects of players’ interests, for example, manga (Japanese graphic novels), anime (Japanese animation) and pop cultural references to television, movies and media (Boluk and LeMieux, 2017). Collectively, this meta-culture has strong positive and negative impacts on the way in which the discourse used surrounding games and gaming meta-culture is constructed and used, effectively dividing what would be recognised as gaming into the ‘good place’ and the ‘bad place’.

The good place

Far from the isolated loner, the average gamer is socially connected and an active participant in the culture that surrounds games. In the same report on the Australian gaming industry, it is noted that 66 per cent of players will read or watch a walkthrough of gameplay shared by another player. Forty-one per cent of players watch eSports events, 31 per cent attend eSports events in-person and 38 per cent enjoy the culture that surrounds eSports. Parents who play with their children do so to spend time with their children and as part of inclusive family fun. Fifty-nine per cent of players will play with children in the same room while 25 per cent will play with their partner online. Twenty-seven per cent of players will post gameplay videos of themselves playing a game and 28 per cent participate in cosplay, publicly dressing as fictional characters from games (Brand et al., 2019).

Video games have been linked to pain management and improvements in life satisfaction (Griffiths, 2005; McGuire, 1984; Wang et al., 2008). Video games also have their place in education, with games promoting general knowledge, increasing student creativity and engagement, as well as providing opportunities from vocational and professional training. Video games can promote team building and cooperation as well as strategic thinking to overcome challenges. Video games also have the potential to offer insight into social issues such as epidemiology (Lofgren and Fefferman, 2007), financial market behaviour (Kieger, 2010) and criminal behaviours (Fleet and Nurmikko-Fuller, 2019). The potential for gaming to have a significant impact for good exists.
There is an increasing number of new media celebrities that almost exclusively engage with the public either through directly playing video games or by more indirectly engaging with video game meta-culture. Videos of players playing games have become a popular genre on services such as YouTube and, more recently, dedicated game streaming services such as Twitch (Johnson and Woodcock, 2019). Sponsors are willing to invest significantly in content streamers who may use and endorse products and services to an engaged audience. Often these streamers also move outside of simply playing games to comment on issues to do with modifying games (modding), gaming hardware and other player/streamers in search of content (Lessel et al., 2017). There is also a subgenre (though this terminology is problematic for reasons that will be touched on later) concerning the role that female gamers play in the streaming landscape. So-called ‘gamer girls’ or ‘eGirls’ can stream themselves playing games, discussing games and partaking in cosplay for a mostly male audience for which they accept donations, gifts or payments. However, this does not mean that all female gamers/streamers are reduced to this role (Harrison et al., 2016; Ruberg et al., 2019). In parallel to the media celebrity, the celebrity of eSports stars has risen, in some cases to a higher profile than some more mainstream sports. Amid rising public interest, increases in prize money, more widespread sponsorship and the sale of broadcast rights, gamers have taken on the role of professional athletes (Hamari and Sjöblom, 2017).

The ability to generate income from game play and game culture has demonstrated a new legitimacy and regard for games and gamers in general, which in turn has begun to break down some of the stigma and moral panic about the role that games play in everyday society. Game play and game culture are beginning to be incorporated in popular culture in the same way that movies and television shows of the past moved into the zeitgeist of previous eras.

The bad place

With the growth in popularity and familiarity with games and gaming culture, both the good and bad side of game culture has been highlighted. There are larger social and structural issues within gaming that continue to be made apparent as gaming shifts from a pastime to a major mainstream industry and source of income. To illustrate, continuing from the myth
that games are a boys-only club, there are strong gender divisions within the industry itself and gamer culture (Assunção, 2016). Games have been predominately developed and marketed to masculine identities, causing much of the game design aesthetics and marketing design to be primarily for the male gaze (Lynch et al., 2016). Male characters, both non-player characters and player-controlled characters (avatars), occupy positions of power and authority. For the player, the male, blank canvas avatar presented by the game often represents ideal masculinities onto which the player can project themselves as the hero/villain of their own fantasy (Trape et al., 2009). Female characters are often placed in subservient roles to main male protagonist characters; even supposedly strong female characters are often still seen to defer to male characters or be forced into traditional female roles. When a female protagonist is allowed, appearances between male avatars and female avatars are more often strongly divided. Where male avatar’s clothing and armour is full-covering and functional, female armours are more often the equivalent of a stainless steel bikini, being revealing and mostly impractical (Hoffswell, 2011; Lynch et al., 2016). This demonstrates how the male gaze affects the basic design principles of games.

This divide is also reflected in the game development industry. From early on, game development was dominated by male identities at the helms of game development studios. This was often the result of computer engineering and computer programming growing out of the STEM disciplines, again a traditionally male dominated and male protected space. This set the scene for a male gaze–oriented gaming design, development and marketing landscape. A common feature of game development exhibitions was the ‘booth babe’: an attractive young woman employed to stand at industry displays to entice the predominantly male audience to engage with the products being marketed (Cornfeld, 2018; Taylor et al., 2009). What developed was a toxic, hegemonic masculinity that was characterised by white, well-educated men in positions of power (Dunlop, 2007; Fron et al., 2007). The hegemony actively attacks female challengers to the status quo, as seen recently with the ‘Gamergate’ controversy and the continued and increasingly more frequent revelations of historic sexual and psychological abuse of female gamers and industry workers (Consalvo, 2012; Mortensen, 2018; Salter, 2018).

Female players are often placed in a no-win situation on the revelation that they are, in fact, female. Skilled female players are often challenged to prove that they are not cheating when displaying similar skill levels to male
players. In fact, skilled female players are met with open hostility by less skilled male players who feel threatened and ‘do not want to get beaten by a girl’ or be seen ‘to be playing like a girl’ by their male peers. Less skilled female players often must suffer the attentions of skilled male players who are likely to instruct them on how to improve – at best an exercise in paternalism, at worst ‘mansplaining’. Male players will often ‘white knight’ (male hero to the rescue) female players to appear sympathetic and well meaning but turn hostile when the level of gratitude is below what was expected (McLean and Griffiths, 2019; Tang et al., 2020). Either way, female players are either reviled or disempowered.

For female streamers there are also some double standards at play. While the work that they perform or the role that they play during that performance is unproblematic, in the same way that we can regard sex work as unproblematic, there is some debate over the ethics of charging money to access this work. Male subscribers and viewers donate gifts and money to the streamer to access content that ranges from public online engagement through to private online engagement, right up to the sharing of ‘lewd’ content. Again, this is not dissimilar to the range of work provided by sex workers. However, there are two perceived issues: the first that this is virtual engagement – no actual physical engagement is undertaken – yet money and gifts change hands. The second is that there are a significant number of male customers who regard the engagement as exclusive to themselves, or at least engage in that delusion, and who can be quite reactionary once that illusion of intimacy and individual attention is broken. On the one hand, the male subscriber expects a ‘girlfriend experience’ from the streamer, but on the other hand is offended that the female streamer is not conforming to the idealised version of the ‘gamer girl’ or ‘eGirl’ that they hold in their mind (Ruberg et al., 2019). Once again there is a male gaze perspective to the boundaries that are set on the way in which females should be perceived and behave (Cullen and Ruberg, 2019).

These divisions are also played out over race, sexuality and gender issues. Many of the features of so-called ‘trash talk’ use provocative language centred on insults towards opposition players and vilify people of different racial, gender and/or sexual orientation groups (Leonard, 2004). These attacks can increase once the player is found to be part of one of these groups. While these insults might be seen to be innocuous or part of the accepted gameplay meta-cultural narrative, semi-deliberate, often ignorant, casual attacks still hold weight for the recipient (Fox and Tang, 2017; Tang and Fox, 2016; Wright et al., 2002). More insidious are the
players who use this veil of acceptability to disguise outright hate speech and personally hold extremist beliefs (Daniels and LaLone, 2012): a kind of ‘don’t hate the player, hate the game’ defence against bigotry.

Therefore, a common theme of bad gaming culture is one of white male hegemony to the exclusion of females, people of colour and non-heterosexuals. It is also self-reinforcing, with the casual acceptability of racist and sexist speech normalising these attitudes as acceptable and part of gaming culture. This acceptance has caused pockets of gaming culture to strongly overlap with other white, male, racist and sexist subcultures (Daniels and LaLone, 2012; Leonard, 2004) – subcultures that thrive on the sharing and posting of hatred, ideology and conspiracy (Lauterbach, 2009). Race and gender boundaries are placed on the expected roles and behaviours of the members of the gaming culture who do not conform to the standards imposed by the hegemony, and there can be a firm reaction from the hegemony when these role expectations and boundaries are crossed.

An intersection exists between these marginal, normalised, casually racist, sexist and reactionary spaces and the alt-right (far right) and incel (involuntary celibates) extremes. Alt-right beliefs centred on the occupation of supposedly white space by non-white individuals and the idea of a conspiracy to eventually replace pure white peoples with mixed race and foreign peoples (the so-called Great Replacement conspiracy) are closely aligned with the perspectives of a minority of gamers. These gamers see games becoming so inclusive and politically correct that, over time, they are eroding the primary gaming theme of the all-white, all-patriotic, all-conquering masculine superhero so that the gamer identity constructed on this ideal is being marginalised. These kinds of appeals to the pure-blooded, patriotic superhero lie at the heart of the identity propaganda associated with the archetypal, national, socialist and fascist movements in the past and into the present (Colley and Moore, 2020; DeCook, 2018).

Incels identities present a similar rhetoric, only rather than being based on race, the ideology is based on gender. The incel community believes in a conspiracy that promotes the belief that collectively, the female population is excluding certain males from access to sex due to various reasons, rendering them involuntarily celibate. Incels tend to blame externalities for their lack of attraction to the female population rather than any of their own shortcomings. In fact, incels usually perceive themselves as quite charming and, in many cases, the ultimate gentlemen.
Incels often tend to view other men who are having sex as graceless brutes who treat females poorly (yet they also think woman want this) or as somehow beating the system and tricking otherwise receptive females into sex to the exclusion of the incel who is ‘playing by the rules’. The rhetoric of female selectivity plays into themes found in the Great Replacement conspiracy and racial purity as well as into misguided notions of masculinity and femininity, with men being seen as chivalrous heroes and woman as damsels in distress who pay for being rescued with physical intimacy and devotion (O’Malley et al., 2020; Waśniewska, 2020).

The message

The message that the Christchurch shooter was trying to send was one of racial purity and a new world order that placed white men at the top and relegated others to the status of subhuman subservient slaves – a population of non-white people who knew their place and who lived and worked where they were told. It harked back to propaganda used by fascist regimes: a homeland for all races, ultimately leading to a final solution for the non-white problems. While not explicit, the implication was that women would take on the role of repopulating the pure white races as their duty to white men, women who owed their lives and security from savage other races to white masculine heroes, women who repaid this heroic service with devotion and reproduction.

The aim of sending this message was to awaken the sleeping members of white society to the reality unfolding before their eyes, especially those were deceived into disbelieving or ignoring reality. It was a rallying cry to those members who shared similar ideals but were too afraid to act on them. It was a simple, clear message to the non-white subhumans that their time was up, that honest white men would no longer sit idly by while they were marginalised and bred out of existence. It was a message of hate, intolerance and ignorance. A common style of extremist messaging, it centred on the grand act to draw attention to a perceived issue that would serve as a signal for like-minded people to act and to awaken those who have been deceived (Campion, 2019; Kaati et al., 2016). Similar messages had been played out before, such as in 2011 in Norway, to draw attention to a terrorist’s manifesto (Berntzen and Sandberg, 2014), or the Oklahoma bombing in 1995, which was intended to spark a revolution (Michel and Herbeck, 2015). It was an old message delivered via much newer packaging.
The end game

The Christchurch shooter took advantage of the space opened up by the intersection of the casual everyday racist and sexist dialogue used by sectors of the gaming community to provoke and intimidate, and the undercurrent of extremism that feeds on the edges of these casual spaces. It is an easy step to take from casual racist and sexist beliefs into full-blown bigotry. The shooter framed his message using common language from the bad place to both communicate with the extremist audience and to potentially influence those individuals who may already be flirting with extremism. This common language is often poorly controlled by gaming companies and facilitated by anonymous free-for-all internet boards (e.g. 4chan, 8chan). While the people on these fringes see no harm in their jokes and provocations, it allows the space for other stronger rhetoric to hide in plain sight.

The shooter used the language to which he had been socialised to frame his message, a social discourse that is familiar to individuals who sit at the intersection between gaming culture and alt-right extremism. The major debate is whether the shooter simply spoke to his peers in the language to which he was accustomed or whether this was a deliberate and crafted attempt to utilise the social discourse and platform of gaming to reach newer, more sympathetic audiences. Either way, the objective was to provoke a response in the audience. The message could be seen as an extension of the bad place’s attitudes and casual bigotry, where the borders are pushed for laughs and point scoring. Conversely, it could be seen as cynically using the space created by the casual bigotry to widen the reach of the extremist views being promulgated.

The final boss

It would be easy to mythologise the shooter based on the existing myth that surrounds gaming and gaming culture. The shooter fits into so many of the categories expressed in the negative stereotype of the lonely, violent gamer. However, the reality is that gaming is much more widespread and social than the stereotype suggests. Gaming is big business and brings with it several social and economic benefits as well as the potential to answer much larger societal questions. Notwithstanding these benefits, there is a permissive element in gaming culture that allows for the normalisation
and spread of hate and ignorance. This is where the Christchurch shooter found the platform on which to spread his manifesto. Gaming and internet culture are far from the myth of isolated individuals; rather, they are a networked collective of overlapping and interconnecting spaces that allow individuals to transmit both positive and negative social goods. The edges of this network contain extremist elements that can diffuse into the more casual spaces that have become permissive of bigotry under the guise of just jokes, provocations and slights used to attack those who sit outside the expected norm, which, while not personally representative of those replicating the extremist language, nonetheless serves to normalise it such that it becomes simple for actual extremist beliefs to stealthily continue to exist.

If that is the case and the shooter, rather than being a lone individual who took extreme action, is part of a wider network that reaches both extremist audiences and casual audiences of younger, more easily influenced individuals, we need to take a further look at whether the shooter got help in formulating what could be a rather clever piece of marketing. We also need to look at the gaming industry and gaming culture itself to help improve control of the margins that the extremist groups seem to take advantage of. A more concerted effort to rein in the normalisation of racist and sexist attitudes towards outsiders, both within the industry and within the player base, remains a priority. While steps have been taken recently to improve the representation of minorities in games, and in the people who make games, there seems to be some distance still to travel.

References


4. HATE THE PLAYER, NOT THE GAME


