Laura Haning

Rhet 105

Position Paper

The Gamers Realm

The world of video gaming has become more exciting and competitive than ever before. I

am aware of how serious some of those who play take it, but am interested to understand more about

why and what makes it so important to them. I intended to spend a few hours a week studying the

so-called gamers on my floor of my dorm. There is a group of four to five who regularly play video

games, particularly Halo. In fact, they play for approximately two hours on a daily basis, and that

time is doubled on weekends. I have chosen to study this group because although I am somewhat

familiar with video games and gaming I only have a few basic assumptions. Through my experience

I plan to determine which of the typical stereotypes are true and which are false. There are many

underlying theories about gamers.

Video gamers have often in the past been labeled as nerds or geeks, but I believe today that is

no longer true. This is comparable to people who use the internet frequently to be considered nerdy,

but today the "cool" kids are the ones with a thousand facebook friends chatting online on an instant

messenger. I grew up watching my older brother and all of his friends spend hours playing video

games. None of those guys would be classified in the nerdy category either; they were the studs or

jocks. They would come home from basketball and baseball practice to relive the experience through

the game. I have continually found a trend that almost any and all guys own a game system and

regularly participate in the gaming activity. My basic opinions and ideas about video gaming do not

include anyone being a nerd or a dork, but at the same time, I may consider those who stay in on

Friday and Saturday nights playing video games a little differently. I find everyone from bookworms

to athletes playing sports, racing, and combat video games. When I picture video gaming I see a dark

room with an odd-smelling aroma filled with teenage boys eating chips and pop. I see them huddled

in a small semi-circle, intensely hovered around the television shouting at the game and one another.

Sometimes I think of them sitting there for so long the odd-smelling aroma turns even odder and the

boys begin to obtain a greasy appearance. Although I am not or never have been sucked into the

gaming realm and consider myself very different from the gamers I can also find many similarities

between us.

As the guys, and the few girls, that spend hours using technology to play video games, I

spend hours using technology to communicate over the internet with my friends. I also figure the

people who become very involved in the video games to be extremely competitive, as am I. They

spend hours playing the games to achieve their desired results, and are always looking for more, in a

very competitive and determined manner, and I approach school, life, and all aspects of it in that

same demeanor. The gamers take their playing very seriously and become extremely intense, and I

often find myself growing very passionate in an activity I participate in that is important to me. The

obvious difference is that the gamers love their games, and spending hours punching buttons to win

the race, score the points, get a touchdown, kill my opponent, or whatever the goal may be doesn't

sound like an activity I would enjoy spending my time doing. I would rather work out, or go

shopping, or even work on homework. But the group of guys I will be studying share many of the

same interests as I do. They are obviously college students, they enjoy sports, and other than playing

video games we take part in many of the same activities. The infatuation, or even obsession, they

develop with the video games will perhaps be the most difficult aspect of this subculture for me to

understand.

      The gamers I will be observing, as I said, are in many ways like me, but their extreme love

for video games will be hard for me to grasp. The way they become so involved and intense in a

video game is beyond me, but also the way they play them is something of interest to me. The way

the guys act when they play, the conversations that take place, and the general atmosphere is all a

foreign idea and culture to me. Plus, it is a large group of guys, and just as men do not understand

women, females do not really understand males either. Trying to understand the obsession with

fighting with a computer to see who can kill who first, and the male mind in general will be the most

challenging characteristics to understand, but I do intend to gain much more knowledge through this

experience.

My expectations for this study are for me to have a better understanding of what I described

to be what is hardest for me to comprehend. I want to know why they chose to spend hours playing

these games instead of something else. I want to learn what is so addicting about them. I am also

interested to realize how they manage to balance the hours of playing, going to class, getting their

work done all while still enjoying the life of a college student. I anticipate the answers to these

questions will not be black and white and they will require some digging and analyzing, but by the

end of the project I hope to have a better perspective, and have my questions answered.