

An Examination of the Female Gender Role in Video Games and Related Media

This paper discusses trends in modern-day advertising and game development that have contributed to the gender divide in the gaming community. In 2014, the Electronic Software Association released a statistical analysis on the demographics of video game players in the United States. In their report, the ESA noted that 48% of gamers in the United States are female, effectively rendering the stereotype that “games are for guys” useless. Despite this change in the community, publishers and developers still use outdated gender role models in advertisements and in-game characters. As a form of mass media and communication, advertisements and video games are able to emulate cross-sections of society including values, sexual roles, and stereotypes across various demographics. For decades, females have mainly been portrayed as sexual objects, dispensable plot devices, or targets for violence. These depictions seep into the social environment of gaming have led to increased violence directed towards women during multiplayer social interactions, creating gender segregation in the community.

Keywords: Videogames, sexism, stereotypes, advertising, gender roles, violence, game development, multiplayer, social interaction