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Stereotypes in Video Games

There are numerous subtle and apparent cases of stereotyping in many video games such as *GTA*. Burgess et al. in their article "*Playing with Prejudice: The Prevalence and Consequences of Racial Stereotypes in Video Games*" argue that video games are quite prevalent in the US with about 90 percent of the people that play these games being children and adolescents (290). However, just as they are prevalent, video games present and infuse numerous kinds of stereotypes into the society. Burgess et al. begin their article by outlining critical facts about stereotyping in video games by logically citing different statistics and facts, and effectively appealing to the emotions of the audience (291). However, despite making a lot of sense, the authors' obsession towards the emotional appeals discredit the article hence their point of argument.



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In this article, Burgess and her co-authors begin their arguments by identifying video games as essential entities in the lives of many Americans (293). They point out that these sources of entertainment have hit record high sales and that many children between the ages of 8 and 17 are deeply engraved in them (Burgess 290). However, while they have proven to be effective sources of entertainment, Burgess et al. claim that ample literature has shown that video games are capable of influencing the thoughts, feelings, and attitudes of people hence premising and proliferating negative stereotypes (295). They then continue to highlight some of the prevalent stereotypes that are associated with video games.

Throughout the piece, the authors effectively employ strong sources which enable them to credibly appeal to ethos and build their argument. They have used a variety of sources such as “Dill, Gill, et al., 2005” to build on their claims about the stereotypic slurs that are propagated by video games. The use of a variety of sources in their literature shows that the authors have done ample background checks with regards to stereotyping in video games. Burgess et al. use a variety of resources to show how ethically wrong it is to depict minority communities in a certain way in video games (297). Then they build on this premise to point out how such depictions have impacted these minorities.

In addition to ethos appeals, the authors use ample logos appeals with the aid of facts and statistics in a bid to drive their arguments home. They outline some of the societal implications of video gaming with regards to the sexualization of women. Evidently, research done by Burgess and her colleagues conclude by pointing out that exposure to stereotypical images in video games has helped alter social perceptions about vices such as sexual harassment whereby those who are more exposed to video games are more lenient to these social crimes (Deskins

200). These factual claims are among the many that Burgess and her fellow authors employ to support their claim that video games have been used to perpetuate dangerous stereotypes.

Starting off by appealing to the logos and ethos, Burgess et al. also amply use the pathos appeals towards the end of their article. They effectively manage to illustrate how stereotypes about minority populations such as the violence and aggressiveness have been perpetuated by video games (Brenick 400). In turn, such portrayals induce aggression and hostility from the African Americans who feel unfairly treated. These authors also elaborate on how video games' makers have perfected the art of not using women and minority populations in leading roles. In short, throughout their article, Burgess et al. employ the pathos appeals with an aim of appealing to the emotions of the readers (300). However, the article takes a wrong turn when they start making unsupported claims on how whites are treated more fairly than minorities instead of focusing on their thesis of identifying the stereotypes that are propagated by video games.

In conclusion, despite starting the paper well and transitioning with perfection, Burgess' conclusive arguments are rather unsubstantiated, which then make the paper questionable considering that the importance of closing remarks in any literary piece. However, these few bad comments do not negate the fact that Burgess et al. make important claims about the gravity of video games' stereotypes. Regardless, the authors had the mandate of controlling the use of pathos appeals, just like they did to other appeals in order to drive the point home effectively.

Works Cited

Brenick, Alaina, et al. "Social evaluations of stereotypic images in video games: Unfair, legitimate, or "Just Entertainment"?" *Youth & Society* 38.4 (2007): 395-419.

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