

I would like for us to do an in-class analysis of a couple of games that we think deserve some attention from the perspective of difference and diversity in games and the game industry.

We've talked about a lot of games in our discussions: WoW, Princess Peach, Metroid, Final Fantasy, and the genre of first-person shooters.

In this class, we will focus a little more closely on looking at 1-3 games in-depth. My intent here is not to have us "deconstruct" the games. Rather, I'd like us to perform a more focused discussion of what we notice, why we notice it, and what we think is worth further discussion.

I need a couple of volunteers to bring in some games that we can examine. They can be games that you thought of when doing the readings on gender and race, or they can be games that we haven't yet discussed. It might be worth, for example, looking at Second Life and seeing what Amanda saw when she first got on, or perhaps talking about the PMS crew that Matt mentioned when he spoke of Halo 2.

The questions I'd like us to examine are:

- What do we notice about the "representational" elements of each game? In other words, how are race, gender, and difference being represented by BOTH the art AND the structure and design of the game?
- What can we say about the cultural influence of the game in terms of play styles and diversity? Does the game make an effort to be culturally relevant to different players and their needs? How? Why?
- Assuming that games are relevant texts in today's popular culture landscape, can we determine what, if any, "message" is being conveyed by these important texts? Is that message significant? Why or why not?