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Editors:

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Tobias Knoll, M.A., Institute for Religious Studies, University of Heidelberg, Germany

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Contributors to this Issue:

Frank G. Bosman
Simone Heidbrink
Mark R Johnson
Tobias Knoll
Roman Ohlendorf
Stefan Piasecki
Dennis Ramirez
Jenny Saucerman

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Table of Contents

- 01 **Towards „a New Province of Humanity“! - Introduction**
Simone Heidbrink & Tobias Knoll
- 06 **'Nothing is true, everything is permitted' - The Portrayal of the *Nizari Isma'ilis* in the *Assassin's Creed* Game Series**
Frank G. Bosman
- 27 **Playing with the legend - Ostension and Extra-Textual Production in *Minecraft***
Roman Ohlendorf
- 45 **Redemption through Annihilation?! - Game Designer's Views on Religion, Culture and Society and Its Influence on Digital Games**
Stefan Piasecki
- 74 **Praise Helix! - Christian Narrative in *Twitch Plays: Pokémon***
Jenny Saucerman & Dennis Ramirez
- 95 **Interview: Mark R Johnson, Creator of *Ultima Ratio Regum***



Redemption through Annihilation?!

Game Designer's views on religion, culture and society and its influences on digital games

Stefan Piasecki

Abstract

While video games have been under public observation for approximately 30 years, focus has hardly ever been put on the creators, designers, developers, or other creative staff.

The “Game Developer Demographics Report” of the *International Game Developers Association* (IGDA) from the year 2005 was one of the very few attempts to survey game developers regarding their personal motivation and outlook on life but it explicitly excluded inquiries on religious aspects; even asking about sexual preferences caused considerable complications.

Who game designers are and what they think is however not unimportant. Video game players are confronted with ethical and moral decisions, quite often set into a background story with multiple references to religious (or “magical” for that matter) topics. The content and the scope of game-experiences reflect the player's personal input – based on the game designers ideas and plans and content, shaped by their very own personality.

According to Gräß, religion certainly is not confined to churches but permeates other public spheres, the media not being the least of these. Religion still primarily deals with the major issues in life – not only in holy books or movies, but also in video games, which are traditionally settings for myths, enigma, legends and also religion.

Hitherto, the following questions remain unexplored: What do game developers think and believe in political and religious matters, what role do they ascribe to themselves and their productions in it? How do developers comprehend their role? This article will present the results of a first explorative study amongst young game developers.

Keywords

Religion, Game Studies, Survey, Computer Video Games, Game developers, Games Academy, Mission, Extremism, Game industry, IGDA International Game Developers Association

1 Religion in Video Games: Field of Existential Questions, Mission or a Contentless Pit?

Who, as a gamer, enters one of the many fantastic video game worlds (from this point forward, this term will be used as a synonym for all on-screen-games) will inevitably be confronted with religious elements. Be it as part of the background story or the rules of the game. Religious basic conditions for rituals, Holy Scriptures, magical or cultural phenomena's are used in games as a basis and explanatory model for artificial environments and are accepted and understood as part of the set of tools and framework to enroll the entertaining experience. To participate is not only welcomed but necessary to survive and proceed in the virtual world. Without an active player there is no game.

But is the usage of religion equivalent to acceptance? Are religious symbols in a game a sign of religious content or could they even be a religious statement?

Video games contain religious symbols, which are displayed and shown in procedures, amulets, magical swords but also religious and ideological extremism, as seen in many background stories to portray adversaries and enemies, both on Earth or in outer space; they also release individuals from something (reality) and call to something (a purpose, a higher calling, a search, “everything you do in Halo adds up to something bigger” (McGonigal 2011, 102)): The player experiences himself taken out of the reality of education and work constraints. He is pushing his own transformation into a fundamentally controllable virtual world.

Also meaningful: In games there are often religious pictures and messages used, as they are rarely found these days in the real world - These often demand a statement, acceptance and submission by the player, that is the only way of becoming and staying part of this very exclusive (virtual) reality. Usually such religious topics and stereotypes were influenced by very different traditions and religions – a substance amalgamated from different sources (O'Donnell 2015, 142) that sometimes even coexist in a single game (O'Donnell 2015, 145). Religious directives and political / social positions, which would be heavily criticised in our real world, are viewed as normal and are tolerated within that fictional framework – yet they originate from realworld-topics, conflicts and discourses (O'Donnell 2015, 151).

Video games, just like teen literature, movies or pop-music are eligible to reveal the “fertile potential” which is latent in the user and gives them space to evolve (Siedler 1995, 32). They also address a multitude of senses and connect players around the world through their linkage to social media. These games can be used as enlightenment for education, as well as missionary work, but also for political propaganda (Bogost 2007, pp. 99). Of course video games are also able to show and teach the premises necessary for living a fulfilled social life - also cross-cultural through scenic and mimicking basic knowledge.

Regarding video games, religious education and social sciences are mainly interested in how they influence players, what kind of personality factors they form (Hartmann / Klimmt 2006, pp. 117), what the players actually do in the virtual world and to see if in the end it is only about wielding power over others (Oerter 1997, p. 60).

By contrast there has only been very little questioning about religion in video games and the intention behind the doing so by the creators: The existence or the potential lack of religion could be the consequence of rational development-decisions and are a reason for a research of motifs and intentions of authors and designers, leading to the ultimate question of who is going to design and create the virtual world, who they are and what fuels them and most importantly *why* they put *what* into their games. In spite of the decades of discussion about violence in video games, these questions have never been raised before although it is the developers that make a game entertaining or persuasive, let the player take part in a real conflict (e.g. to fight “Israeli occupants” (Piasecki 2003, 42) or submit religious messages (Jacobs 2015).

It is because of this reason that in 2012 a survey was directed about programmers and game creators and the results have been evaluated in context of religious education and social-sciences. The paper was submitted under the heading of “Erlösung durch Vernichtung?! Unterhaltung, Technik-Faszination und Muster des Religiösen im Videospiele – eine explorative Studie an Schnittpunkten von Religionspädagogik, Sozialwissenschaften und Game Studies” (*Redemption through Annihilation?! – an explorative research on Game Designer’s views on religion, culture and society and its influences on digital games*) as a state doctorate at the university of Kassel (Hesse, Germany) and was accepted in May of 2015.

The title is a play on two things: Firstly on the totality of binary reality, which can only move between the two extremes of ON or OFF, all or nothing. Furthermore it reads itself as the goal of the very most recent video games to date, which only know the triumph of the player or his demise. For decades games have often been about saving the entire world, which either has to be freed, preserved or delivered from something - often from earthly as well as alien species, which don't have to be intellectually outplayed, but openly “beaten”. Often in a game the “triumph” over enemies is equivalent to their “annihilation”, these enemies more often than not are members of militant cultures, ideologies and religions, which makes the game a venue of a fictive cultural war.

2 A Cue: The Capcom-Incident and “Moschee Baba”

Video games can, just like any other form of media, polarise in political, cultural or religious ways. A conflict known even beyond the gaming world occurred in 2012 and was caused by two titles of

the “Resident Evil” franchise, which was successfully introduced to the market in 1996: “Resident Evil: Part 5” and “RE: The Darkside Chronicles”.

The mentioned games display classic horror scenes, the world is overrun by zombies and the players’ objective is to fight back against them and ultimately destroy them. The game “Resident Evil: The Darkside Chronicles” started a debate about the relevance of criticism by the church¹. Part 5 on the other hand caused muslims to get really angry.

Many clergies in England were concerned that these games could possibly awake an interest in the occult in a certain target audience, especially youth. Other debates occurred, once there was a book identified as a Qur'an spotted on the floor in Part 5², also there were accusations of racism as most of the zombies were of dark skin colour.³

The producers reacted differently – whilst the criticism by the Anglican church was ignored as incompetence by the church to review video games, the racism allegations were met by understanding and a promise to be more sensible in the future.

It is not surprising that social discourses and re-evaluations of religiousness and other themes and motives (like homosexuality, permanent observation etc.) have become subject to video games, as they already use historic and contemporary discourses, myths, traditions and Holy Scriptures.

However: With the religion contemptuous words of the manufacturer Capcom in the “Resident Evil debate” an industry representative has explicitly rejected church opinion. Are religious groups really able to judge and pass sentence in this regard? Or, asked in the words of Manfred Pirner: Are churches using the credit (and the support) they actually (for now) still have from the youth (Pirner 2012, 245)? Do they consult them? Do they organise majorities? Otherwise: Do theology and religious groups actually offer themselves as dialogue partners? Do they even want to take part in constructive debates or do they only criticise? Would their council be sought-after and accepted?

Even some novels take facts of history or society and geography and display them wrongfully and cause contradiction. Remember the “Satanic verses” by Salman Rusdhie, for which he was placed with a death-fatwa. For video games this field of conflict occurs as much if looking at inter-religious conflicts and islamic riots caused by islam critic media productions i.e. cartoons and the like (Piasecki 2015, pp. 239). A wrongfully displayed situation, a misinterpreted symbolic (burning Qur'an's) can, in the language of the internet, cause a hugely emotional “cultural shit-storm”. This

1 <http://www.escapistmagazine.com/news/view/96380-Capcom-Responds-to-Resident-Evil-Religious-Criticism>, 19.7.2015.

2 <http://www.onlinewelten.com/games/resident-evil-5/news/empoeung-boden-liegenden-koran-114766/>, 19.7.2015.

3 <http://www.onlinewelten.com/games/resident-evil-5/news/capcom-rassismus-debatte-lehren-gezogen-88009/>, 19.7.2015.

goes for unintentional wrong doings in the content development and especially when there is an intention in causing this effect as the production “Moschee Baba” shows.

The game comes from the Austrian party “FPÖ” and is a combination of elements from popular games like “Moorhuhn” filled up with a political statement.⁴ In the mentioned game one objective is to “stop” minarets as a way of giving / showing foreigners the red card. There is no direct force at play and the game is holding back on direct political phrases, but the game works on the emotional level by using unambiguous characters and symbolism to take the player’s already existing knowledge and emotions and channel them and give him the tools in the game to do what he wishes would happen (“stop islamisation” or “foreigners out!”) which he is then able to do in the next elections. The religious level is rather weakly displayed and used. It takes quite a bit of knowledge by the player to judge religiously on the content or finding a reason for his acting.

3 Short Overview on the Games Market

How is the economical and societal relevance of video games and the potential from the creative designers to be understood?

Since 1997 the ACTA (computer and technology analysis from Allensbach, Germany) is being conducted to monitor the acceptance and usage of digital media.⁵ Games and the appropriate market are also considered. The authors’ opinion is that the market is changing on the technology level as well as the demographic. For that exact reason a new study in 2013 considered the strongly growing market of mobile phone games and the age group of up to 70 years of age.⁶

The market councillor Pricewaterhousecoopers also conducts similar surveys (Pricewaterhousecoopers 2012 - PWC). Equally interesting is what the German federal-association of the gaming industry (Bundesverband Interaktive Unterhaltungssoftware - BIU) publishes, which conducts its own surveys much like movie and music associations.

The increasing heterogeneity of the German market is not only reflected in content, but also in sales and distribution: Less physical volumes in stores and more digital downloads. The overall video game market increased in 2011 by 3.5% to 1.99 billion EUR (BIU 2012, p. 1).

4 <http://stmv1.orf.at/stories/466595>, 27.7.2015.

5 http://www.ifd-allensbach.de/fileadmin/ACTA/ACTA2012/ACTA2012_Codebuchauschnitte/ACTA2012_Spiele.pdf, 25.7.2015.

6 http://www.ifd-allensbach.de/uploads/tx_reportsdocs/PD_2013_09.pdf, 24.7.2015.

The PC-gaming crowd still plays a major part: 17.2 million players use a PC, 9.2 million use a gaming console in addition or as a standalone. 6.7 million use a mobile gaming console (BIU 2011, p. 4).

With time content for “mobile gaming” becomes more relevant: In the first term of 2012 a total of 3.5 million games were sold for mobile consoles (Revenue: 83 million EUR / average unit price of 24 EUR) and 10.8 million Apps for Smartphones. (Revenue: 20.4 million / average unit price 1.90 EUR). 16.5 million Germans play on the internet (first term 2012), of which 5.6 million play MMORPG's, online-games and the like, 12 million play social online games (i.e. Facebook games) (BIU 2012, p. 3).

With the increment of opportunities to play games on almost every screen there is, the potential audience grew accordingly. With better controls and elements, games are now able to be controlled more intuitively.

So called *AppStores* are able to deliver a low-threshold service for an unmanageable market for every kind of inquiry. So it is of little surprise that in the first term of 2012 4.6 million (2011: 3.7; 2010: 3.2; 2009: 1.1) people have bought virtual gaming items and on average spent 66 EUR, compared to the 43 EUR in 2010. The development becomes especially clear if the consumption is viewed over a span of multiple years (BIU 2012, 5).

This explains the still very strong growth of the gaming industry, at least if directly compared to other media products. A growth which isn't only produced by the franchises themselves but also by a still growing market penetration. Next to mobile phones there are especially flat screen TV's, which today mostly have some kind of networking features and internet access and a link to AppStores – bringing games to almost everywhere. PriceWaterhouseCoopers visualizes this with the numbers they collected: In 2011 console games in Germany had a market share of 55.2%, PC-games 22.4% and online-games 20.9% (mobile devices 1.5%). This is going to change until 2016 to 33.9% for online games with a slight decrease in console gaming (49.9%) a heavy decrease in the PC segment down to 14.2%. Mobile games could grow slightly to 2.1%.⁷

The German video game industry has earned EUR 1.098 billion EUR with console games, 445 million EUR with PC games, 29 million EUR through mobile games, 416 million EUR with online games and a total of EUR 1.988 billion in 2011. By 2016, PricewaterhouseCoopers estimates an average growth of the overall market by 7.7% with corresponding growth rates.⁸ PWC considered not only the sold unit count, but also DLC's (downloadable content) and online games, as most legal purchases are done online these days. A dark figure could possibly arise as there are

7 <http://de.statista.com/statistik/daten/studie/239635/umfrage/umsatzanteile-im-markt-fuer-videospiele-in-deutschland/>, 28.7.2015.

8 <http://www.presseportal.de/pm/8664/2305447>, 31.7.2015.

foreign portals which are able to operate in Germany but their revenue and sold units are not to be counted.

Compared to the other media like movies and music a market situation arises in which the video game market has surpassed the music and movie industry. They have found a new niche in health and fitness programs, as we are facing a older growing society, which are advised to be used by the health politics and the health insurance's.⁹

Artificial worlds, content and game types are becoming daily routine for more and more people, as are Apps with gaming elements. Video gaming has become a matter for almost anyone now in one form or another.

4 Industrial Field, Job Market and Content Spectrum: Who are Game Developers and What is Going Through Their Mind? The IGDA-Survey (2005)

The about 300 established video game companies in Germany (165 developers, 60 publishers and 75 developing and publishing) are employing a total of about 10500 people at the moment - 6350 are directly employed with publishers and developers and 4150 are people that work in cooperation with them, such as sound engineers, distribution, advertisement, merchandising and so forth) (BIU 2012, 3). What kind of people are hiding behind these numbers? Since no comparable figures exist to date for Germany, an American survey addressing the topic shall now be consulted.

In 2005 the *International Game Developers Association*¹⁰, conducted a research about the demographic background of game developers and published two main documents (referenced as IGDA DEMOGRAPHICS and IGDA WHITE PAPER). Already in the preamble the main stereotypical question arises, if the “young white male” dominates the industry, as it always has been assumed. Also the IGDA has found out that the personal convictions of humans always flow into their work and that this work will display the personality and views of the developer (IGDA DEMOGRAPHICS 2005, 4).

Noteworthy is that there have been no explicit questions about religion and familiarity, although they are still considered very important to creative work (ibid.). There is hope for future work in this sector expressed as it is forming the “*culture of gaming development*” (ibid.). But even their newly conducted survey was groundbreaking, said the IDGA, as nothing similar has ever been done before (IGDA DEMOGRAPHICS 2005, 5).

9 <http://www.medienpaed.com/globalassets/medienpaed/15-16/lampert0903.pdf>, 15.7.2015.

10 <http://www.igda.org/>, 15.7.2015.

The IDGA survey stood before the same question as we did: Who do we ask? Only developers or also other people in the gaming industry that might still add up to the creative results that materialize in a video-game? How do we identify the creative flock of people and how would you separate them from others? To solve this problem, two investigations have been done by IGDA. One directed at the more administrative staff and another at the creative personnel.

Because of different assortment processes only 3128 of the 6437 replies (80.000 questionnaires were sent out resp. individuals were contacted) have been validated and processed (for critical honouring see Piasecki 2015, chapter 7.1.2).

With regards to the total requests that were sent out we can see a response rate of 12%, of which only 5% were used, as certain developer and world markets have been excluded on purpose.

According to this IDGA-survey developers are: white, male, hetero-sexual, not disabled, are on average 31 years old, have some form of higher education, have worked at least 5 years in the industry, earn an average of US\$ 57,000 as developer, artist or designer and most of them come from a wide spectrum of developers, so that the variety of ideas, preferences, convictions and experiences of the market (IGDA DEMOGRAPHICS 2005, 4) can be represented (IGDA DEMOGRAPHICS 2005, 10).

With 83.3% the most employees are of white skin colour (ibid.) and work the longest time in the industry, where they also earn the most (IGDA DEMOGRAPHICS 2005, 11). The authors claim that the long time employment is causing the high salary and not the skin colour.

Because of the high number of whites in the industry the survey differentiates only between white and non-white (black, hispanic., asian, ...). This appears to be quite sad as the minority of non-whites seems to think of the industry more diverse than the whites which represent the majority (IGDA DEMOGRAPHICS 2005, p. 11).

Onwards to gender equality, 11.5% of the questioned appear to be female (IGDA DEMOGRAPHICS 2005, 12) (which mainly work in managing, writing and marketing positions, seldom in actual technical jobs (IGDA DEMOGRAPHICS 2005, 13)). The sexual orientation is mainly hetero-sexual with 92%. Only 2.7% said they are homo or bi-sexual, 2.6% refused to answer the question (IGDA DEMOGRAPHICS 2005, 15).

Interesting to note: Especially the questions about sexuality (Sexual Orientation / Transgender) sparked anger with some of the participants towards the IDGA, even led to personal insults via mail and even had participants cancel the survey (ibid.).

This negative tendency towards personal questions could already be observed in 2005 and re-occurs today in the following survey. This time it wasn't questions about sexuality that caused the anger but rather questions about religious identity. The critical response even sounds very similar.

Here some of the interviewees claimed questions about religion would be “religious propaganda” and an attempt to “misuse games as a tool for missionary work” (Piasecki 2015, chapter 7.7 “closing comments”).

With regards to their “White Paper on Industry Quality of Life Issues” (IGDA WHITE PAPER 2004) the authors explained that a third of the developers expect to leave the industry in five years and about half think they will leave in the next 10 (IGDA WHITE PAPER 2004, 17). This shows the extreme working conditions inside the industry (raised by IGDA in an “open letter”¹¹), which are affected by very rapid rates of extensive success and failure, as well as a lot of burn-out experiences (IGDA WHITE PAPER 2004, 44).

A lot of companies now have official diversity-programmes a.k.a. anti-discrimination-programmes (81%) and equality-projects (78%). When now looking at the very high stress potential and the high personnel demand, as well as the short time people stay in the job, it is almost unbelievable that only 22% of the companies have seized measures and offer company intern social work or “retention” (IGDA DEMOGRAPHICS 2005, 21 and IGDA WHITE PAPER 2004, 46).

The significance of personal views and convictions of developers is highlighted several times. The massive success of games like “The Sims” (Maxis / Electronic Arts, since 2000) is claimed to be partly coming from the gender-equal developing teams (as “The Sims” had) (IGDA DEMOGRAPHICS 2005, 22).

Even though there are no German surveys which could be an equivalent to these, rare results about self-perceptions of developers from surveys around 1990 give us a deeper look.

Schachtner had asked developers predominantly from the industrial sector (Schachtner 1993, 10). The questioning took place in 1989 and comprised 36 interviews in the greater area of Munich, meaning it is neither up to date nor representative. But it gives us a very unique angle and ideas for our own questions and reflection. Because even back then there were similar things to be observed as it was about 15 years later with the IGDA study: Developers wanted to “quit” or “stop working (for at least a year)”, “disappear” or go into early retirement, as they are not going to last longer than 5 years (Schachtner 1993, 230). They even had escapist fantasies: doing cabaret or travel by bike through Arabia – working anything but technologically (Schachtner 1993, 231) – which shows the deepness of frustration. A remark made by Söder-Mahlmann in the same time frame gives us some insight into this. He describes, in reference to Kidder as well as Huebner / Krafft / Ortmann, how company intern propaganda (a project is called “Kampfhandlung” / fighting operation, the team has to “achieve something, that goes beyond the achievability of a single person”, “ones own

11 <http://www.igda.org/news/176887/Open-Letter-Quality-of-Life-Issues-are-Holding-Back-the-Game-Industry.htm>, 31.7.2015.

fate is connected with the project”) and production force tie the personnel to the product and how they have to submit themselves (socially and personally) to it (Söder-Mahlmann 1992, pp. 147).

Developers, as it seems, are giving projects their all and are in danger of burning out, doing so. “Work” is obviously much more than just a “job” to them (another formidable witness of this is Weizenbaum who also reports about the mental behaviour of “obsessive programmers”, spanning two decades from the 1960s-1970s (Weizenbaum 1978, pp. 161)).

5 Why Care About Developers? Aspects of Author Research

If production could influence the recipients' awareness, the question of producers' intention arises, especially if their work ethos is very high. Communication researchers have, for that reason, been investigating the personal attitude of journalists to learn about their determination and “Weltbildproduktion” (“production of worldview”) (Schulz 1997, 236). This kind of research is lacking in other areas such as the portrayal of world view in youth novels. Examples like C. S. Lewis' “Narnia”-books with its strong Christian pictures, motifs and language as well as the openly anti-Narnia works of Philip Pullman (“His Dark Materials” and of course the “Left Behind”-novels by Tim LaHaye and Jerry Jenkins) show how intentional authors fill up their literary works with their own opinions. Although not as fully interactive as games, books can also be read in different ways (Jacobs 2015, 96) and therefor be “personalised” by “users”.

Video games, next to movies, TV-shows and books, are very impressing and formative for a child's mind and are often fondly remembered (see with reference to comic books Leinen / Rings 2007). Older surveys about youth affine media come from Doetsch and Neumann. As with newer research Doetsch (Doetsch 1958, 73) decided to go with an analysis of comics in different categories (i.e. pictures, structure, language, world view). But also things like how it is with self control, one's social skills, and how one is able to control his feelings and will power of readers were tested (Doetsch 1958, 104).

More interesting things were found in the aftermath of the 1968-movements. In line with the back then in Germany predominant “Ideologiekritik” some critical questions were not only directed towards the world view submitted by teachers or through the media and its productions like youth novels but also to the authors of such; they provided information about what kind of books they read during their own childhood and which influenced them most (Gelberg 1974).

The authority critical discourse analysis in the 1970's especially tried to find anti-Semitic traditions in works by authors that were socialised during the hight of the NS-regime. It was feared

that ideological constants and anti-democratic thinking was transported to a new generation through books (see also Jäger / Jäger 2007, p. 43).

Neumann was looking at the political content of “Groschenheften” (cheap little magazines: “penny dreadfuls”) which were a common thing used to pass time in 1976 before there were things like game boys and the like. The survey researched the “Groschenheft” as a mass communicator (!) (Neumann 1976, 12) and shined a light on the “construction of a contrast world” (ibid., pp. 26), before the lines were subject to content analytical treatment (ibid., 33). The different categories / contents of these booklets were presented (Landser-books, western story's, Dr. novels and so forth) (ibid., 34) as well as “the role of women” (ibid., pp. 138), sexual morality (ibid., 142) and lastly political content were evaluated (ibid., 147). This work is unique in the way that it is the only case where authors (of novel-booklets from Bastei-Lübbe in Bergisch-Gladbach, Germany) were actually asked about their work (ibid., 14).

Only a few books shed light on the the life and work circumstances of authors (Müller 1980; not focused on just youth books, Fohrbeck / Wiesand 1972; about how authors developed a sense for reading in the first place Unseld 1975, Bücken 1979 and recently Naumann 2005).

The conscious and deliberate questioning of authors has not been continued since the late 1970's. Some famous authors like Astrid Lindgren have come to attention and her work has been contemplated in context to it's time. But these remained exceptions. There is still a great desire as not only novel authors but also song writers, screen-play writers and the like take influence in forming a world view for people.

For the sake of completeness I would like to point towards a recently established series of lectures at the University of Kassel, which looks at the communicated worldview to children in children's audio dramas like “Benjamin Blümchen”, “Das Sams” or “5 Freunde”. These were inspected, through a societal- and cultural scientific perspective, for stereotypes.¹² Even if this is not a dedicated author research, it is interesting to see that the personality and behaviour of Benjamin Blümchen and others seems to portray anarchistic world views. The same goes for comics, their authors represent positions which are detectable in the end product. Such influence and interests from authors and clients were lately drawn by Hangartner for non-fictional comics. Comics are also able to deliver narrative approaches to every day topics and living environments. They have a goal; this projection is gladly acknowledged (Hangartner in Hangartner / Keller / Oechslin 2013, pp. 317).

That author research makes sense of creative productions is obvious, as everybody that is creative or thinks of himself as an artist has and needs always a part of himself to flow into his creation / work. The “Kundegabehandlung”, an action to express an individual will of

12 <https://www.uni-kassel.de/fb05/index.php?id=37979>, 20.7.2015.

communication does always have an impact on those who receive this act of communication and its content (Radlanski 1995, 223). Based on this we can understand game developers both as creators *and* communicators - but still they don't get the scientific (and public) recognition they deserve. Many specific articles regarding video games are written by former game developers, but they mostly address practical questions. Individual views and opinions seem not to have been too interesting in the past, but slowly this situation changes, as industry veterans like Nolan Bushnell oder Steve Jobs come to age and step out into retirement or pass away (Slater 1989, Wolf 2013, Kushner 2004). Grossman presents current and former developers and grants them space to let them express their view on things and how and why they developed their games, what worked great and what went wrong (Grossman 2003). Here, they also talk about how and why they added aspects of religion into their games: most often a “system of religion” next to diplomacy and resources was integrated (Age of Empires II – Grossman 2003, 116) as part of the general set of tools and functions or “various aspects of environment” (Tropico – Grossman 2003, 138). There is another book called “Game Generations” which is entirely dedicated towards developer interviews (Magdans 2008). The downside is, there are so many (although all very interesting) interviews featured, they are all kept very short; sometimes they even cram multiple developers onto two pages and don't even conduct a scientifically correct questioning.

If children books like “Momo”, “Pipi Langstrumpf” (Pipi Longstocking), “Jim Knopf” and others have not only been able to emboss public opinion, but also influence youth culture, the same must be thought of video-games.

Games are, without any exaggeration, for many many people part of their very personal media biography - even though they are not recognised by society as such (see also Zimmermann / Geißler 2008). Only after the creation of the “Deutscher Computerspielepreises” (German video-game award) by the federal secretary of state for culture in 2009, video-games are now better recognised as cultural goods.¹³

To come to the point: If good literature can inspire and move people, why not video-games, too? And if games can do so, who is weaving them and why to raise this effect?

13 http://www.bundesregierung.de/Webs/Breg/DE/Bundesregierung/BeauftragtefuerKulturundMedien/medien/medienkompetenz/dtComputerspielpreis/_node.html, 24.7.2015.

6 Field of Research: Game Designers at the Games Academy in Berlin and Frankfurt

To make an educated guess about the intentions of game designers, they need to be consulted. But as the IDGA already spotted there is the big problem of finding people to talk to; most companies are pretty small and the staff fluctuates a lot. Another problem is the uncertainty of responses, too different are the jobs that people are doing especially in smaller companies, where people sometimes perform several jobs at the same time.

In contrast to that, undergraduates studying game design are young, interested in technology and skilled in development. They all come together to central places (educational institutions) and make it a lot easier to conduct surveys. A steadily growing number of facilities offer courses that teach gaming related subjects. One of the best known facilities in the industry is the Games Academy (GA)¹⁴ in Berlin ([media.net](http://www.media.net) says it is the leading academy for the education of professional game designers, programmers, artists and producers in Europe).¹⁵ It was set up and is still led by Thomas Długaiczek, who also founded the USK (“Unterhaltungssoftware Selbstkontrolle” - entertainment software self-monitoring control) in the early 1990s which is in force in all of Germany. The USK is an age-rating board for video-games, much like what the FSK is for movies. Because the Games Academy is so well known it is one of the most sought after places to go for people who want to become game designers; tuition fees underline the professional approach.

On November, the 13th of 2008 the first industry-hearing between software developers, game developers and the federal government took place there (Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft und Technologie 2009). Thomas Długaiczek has over 20 years of industry experience, he is also a registered social pedagogue which the GA emphasised qualifies him to be a suitable cooperation partner for this hearing.

GA has two facilities: one in Berlin and one in Frankfurt. In 2012 a total of 180 people studied at their schools. The group of students will here be understood as *collective* for this survey (Bortz 2005, 15 and also 27), since their validity cannot be closer examined out of the total of German game developers, although they still serve as a sample for all of the industry and can be used as such for future surveys.

The students come from all of Germany and were presented with the background of this study in Berlin through a personal introduction. For two weeks the students could answer using an

14 <http://www.games-academy.de/>, 17.7.2015.

15 http://www.medianet-bb.de/DE/Medianet_Member/Games-Academy-GmbH/, 19.7.2015.

online form hosted by MonkeySurvey. The link to the survey was only known and submitted to the students.

Talking to a collective of subjects and not to staff of certain companies also helped to avoid distortions that may arise from loyalty constraints or “brand awareness”. In this study the young developers had a very strong sense of milieu, the identification “as developers” was very strong. Withing the frame of a concrete company a different “gravity” between departments, projects or even in comparison to other companies might have influenced the reactions.

Brief description of the samples:

A total of n=59 students (of 180 in that year according to numbers provided by the GA) took part. The students were mostly between 19 and 27 years old. Almost one quarter (23.4%) was female (11) - 76.6% were male (36) and 12 did not specify. Most of them were from western Germany (further information arises from results about the social-demographic, questions 64-68, chapter 7.7 Results).

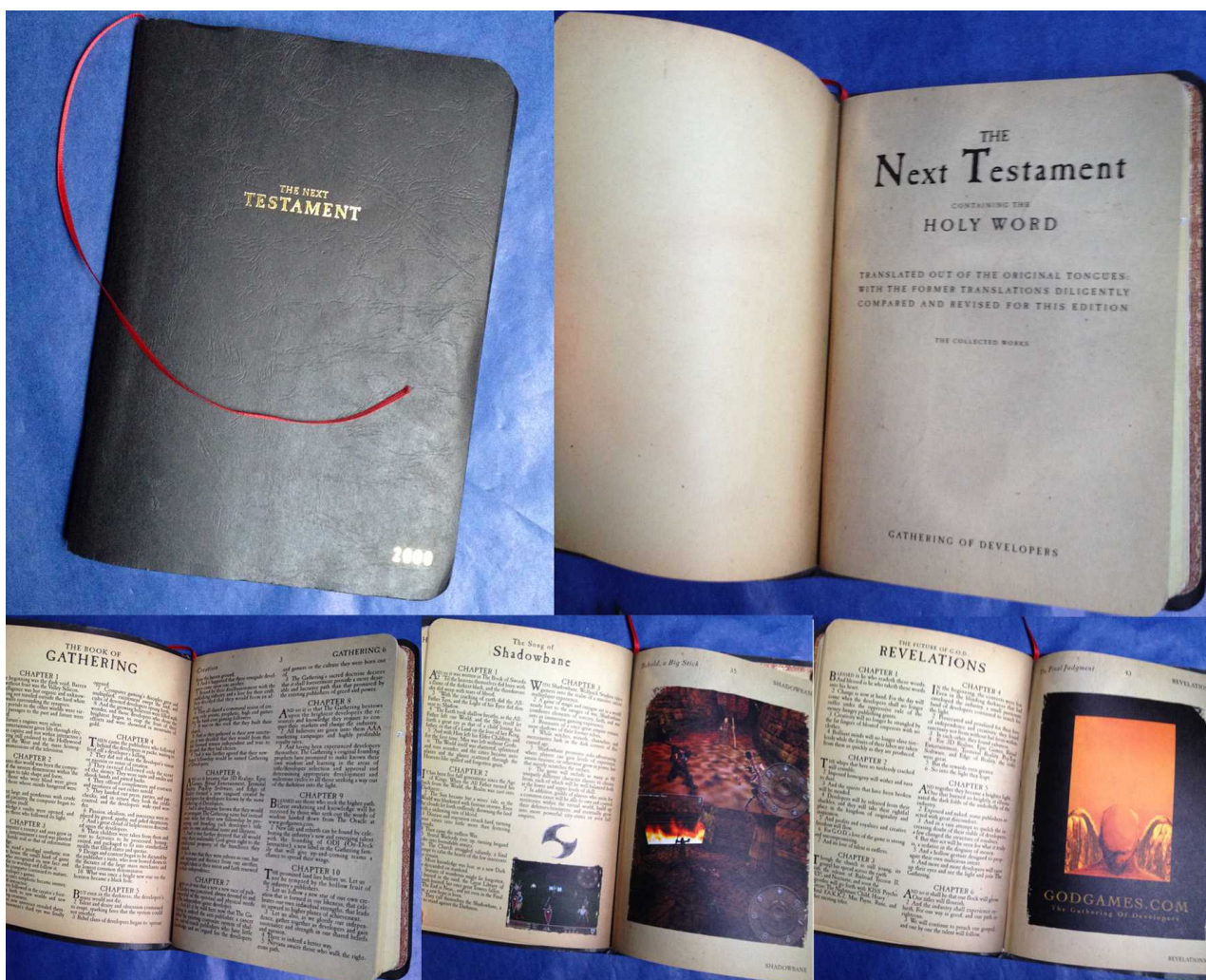
7 Developers and Their World View

What do game developers think, believe and feel religiously, politically and culturally?

In contrast to other discussions that are focussed on how games actually influence players, this is about *who* actually makes media (video-games). Game developers like to play with religious subjects, pictures or symbols in their productions. For instance, the developer group “Gathering of Developers” - short: Godgames - released a catalog in 2000 called “The Next Testament” in form of holy scripture.

The design of this catalog is done quite lovingly and dignified. The title page speaks of this “next Testament” containing “the holy scripture”, “translated from the original languages”. The first chapter of the catalogue, whose creator wanted to emancipate oneself from the all mighty game publishers, starts with analogies to the gospel of John (Joh 1,1 – GOD Games 2000, 3).

Of course this layout and self depiction does not imply any kind of avowal. Rather it shows that widely known cultural and religious topics are used and woven into a fantasy-setting – just as O’Donnell described (see above). Otherwise they obviously refer to something that they believe is known by their target audience – either previous religious knowledge or rather prejudices of and about religion. An examination of the subject by the reader is expected, thought processes are to be put in gear. Interest in the product that is at stake has to be communicated.



Schachtner and Söder-Mahlmann had clues to this already 25 years ago in their work. Schachtner asked questions about the self-conception and mysticism in developers lives. She learned that developers acknowledge subjectivity of their machine dominated life, that they see their life trimmed down, also through long work hours (Schachtner 1993, 206).

Söder-Mahlmann, who also worked in software development for many years, found very clear words for what he thinks of the subjectivity of developers. They don't search for paradise, they create it; They don't beg the Gods for absolution, they made themselves to Gods (Söder-Mahlmann 1991, 11).

Hackers, video game players and programmers are all connected by the desire to execute power in a controlled, particularly the virtual, universe (Söder-Mahlmann 1991, 78). According to him, employees in this industry are looking for the adventure the same way professional athletes

are. They are inclined to link their personal fate to that of the project. The accomplishment of a project is absolutely necessary (Söder-Mahlmann 1991, 151).

Next to details about a typical work day, Schachtner wanted to know very personal and world view related things from the developers. Her religious / world view related questions were hit by reluctant answering and questions about the soul were even completely rejected by a developer. His comment to all of it was that the brain cannot be explained with a soul, it is not necessary for it. The human body is a biological system and its component brain is operating all the sub components (Schachtner 1993, 208). More direct questions about feelings and emotions were stopped by a programmer; a questioned student tried to find a girl friend by using a precise, planned analytical plan, as if he was writing a computer program (Schachtner 1993, 209). This hints that technicians, tech-savvy people or programmers trust structures more than emotions (Schachtner 1993, 210).

But doesn't this mean that programmers are over proportionally rational? And doesn't this mean that their interest in religion may not be very developed? These questions already lead us into the field of interest: What do developers think and believe? What kind of (also religious) socialisation have they experienced? What affects them when they are making up background stories for their new games? Are culture and religion only quarries to them that they can pick and choose from to make their story more interesting? Or are they fields of interest that are used deliberately to communicate messages?

And what role do possible clients and employers play? Do game developers fundamentally follow them or do they mostly follow their own plans?

7.1 Questions and Hypothesis / Methodology and Instrument

Games are the result of complex thought processes by socialised individuals. This had to be respected. Firstly hypotheses (H1-4 – see below) had to be made, which are supposed to help the development process of a video game in its social and cultural dimensions.

The hypotheses (H1-4) were then tested and scrutinised by asking over 60 questions. The survey was anonymous (Atteslander 1995, pp. 132, esp. pp. 167) and the scientist was never present during the answering process. The questions were asked in mixed orders and were later pinned to the according hypothesis.

Standardised questionings are a common and structured method to determine personal views from individuals (Treumann / Baacke / Hugger / Vollbrecht 2002, pp. 39). Whilst quantitative questionings are economically awesome, they don't leave space for “personal” and “emotional” overtones. A qualitative survey may be great to determine individual views, but economically only a very limited number of participants could have been interviewed, too few for an explorative work.

Another important thing is the anonymity. Especially world view or sexual questions are met with reservation, as it has been visible in the past.

A decision was to be made between an approach following the “grounded theory” (Lamnek 2005, pp. 100) which deals with a smaller amount of participants but promises more in-depth results (Strübing 2008, pp. 37 resp. pp. 79) and a quantitative questioning that suits larger groups of participants better.

For the questioning we found a middle way. We did a quantitative online survey with comment sections so people were able to give us also qualitative answers (Scholl 2009, pp. 178).

The population consists of makers of “screen-based video games” (game developers). Being screen-based means we do not have all kind of developers in the survey: e.g. people working on electronic board game designs, real-role-games, or real-laser-fights (“Laser Dromes”) are of course not included.

As this is such a new survey extra care was taken to make sure we are able to conduct it again in the future (Scholl 2009, pp. 87). Because of this it was important to have direct and secure access to a social-demographic and a with regards to content determinable collective of which we needed to generate a good sample (Buttler / Stroh 1992, 33 – regarding the construction of samples see Lamnek 2005, pp. 187 resp. 189). All this we were able to do at the Games Academy (regarding the design of samples see Schnell / Hill / Esser 1995, pp. 251, resp. pp. 256).

The questionnaire addresses a number of items which give us access to unprecedented views at the thought processes of developers. Some parts of the Shell youth-survey from 2010 (“Lebenswelten und Weltorientierung” (Shell 2010, pp. 37), “Familie, Schule, Freizeit” (Shell 2010, pp. 53) and also “Wertorientierungen und Religiosität” (Shell 2010, pp. 194) as well as “Zeitvertreib, Alltagswahrnehmung und Inhalte im Internet” (Shell 2010, pp. 101) and the qualitative oriented considerations from Faix (Faix 2007, pp. 123 and pp. 136 – categories from pp. 170) gave us incentive. To some degree from Grazow (Gramzow 2004), as well as the older studies by Jörns (Jörns 1997, pp. 28 – questionnaire pp. 233) and Nipkow (Nipkow 2000, pp. 51 (- 88)).

Furthermore the surveys by Ziebert and Riegel were helpful at letting us understand the world-views of youngsters (Ziebert / Riegel 2008, construction of questionnaire pp. 203).

In multiple runs prior to the actual survey the questionnaire was modified, shortened and made easier to understand (Scholl 2009, pp. 147).

Participants were asked about their personal media usage, their school and family background. Also about their cultural and political views and about some subjects and themes of the

games market. There were even questions such as which political party or religious group they would work for.

Especially questions about the world view were asked in a way that the participants didn't feel “interrogated” about their religious preference (still readable: Noelle 1963, pp. 50), as an “allergic” reactions to these questions had to be expected. In the course of ALLBUS 1982, questions of such nature caused irritation amongst many participants and forced the researchers to remove such questions (Hagstotz / Kirschner / Porst / Prüfer 1983), the same way we saw questions about sexual orientation being rejected in the IDGA-survey IGDA DEMOGRAPHICS 2005, 15 – see also “Comments on Diversity”¹⁶: 2).

7.2 Overview on Results, Evaluation and Summary: Meaning of Religion as an Element of Video Games – the Developers' Views

The answers to the questions correspond to the hypotheses that were formed early on in the process of designing the study. These hypotheses will now be followed by conclusions extracted from the results of the survey.

H1: Game developers are nonreligious and nonpolitical “technical handyman”. They choose themes and subjects according to the game that is being developed. Because of this a game with political or religious content is nothing more than a “theme composition” and does not intend any “persuasions”.

The assumption of game developers being entirely areligious and apolitical has to be looked at very considerably. Most of them indeed seem to be quite unreligious: Two thirds of the participants have never prayed at home (Q7), less than 10% go to church ever so often or for special occasions (Q19), more than 50% does not believe in God and less than 15% answered the question about their personal beliefs (Q16) approvingly.

Although 53.6% are still part of a Christian confession, 39% left the church. No other religion was represented (Q12). Only 8.8% felt like they have a “strong” or “somewhat strong” interest in religious subjects (Q6). At the same time they would be o.k. with religious content being part of the game if it was part of the end goal or general content (Q26), God in the classical sense is not favoured, rather in form of “a higher being” or “cosmic energy” (Q28).

Religious connoted terms, such as “redemption” (Q42) and “destruction” (Q48), are well known and most of them accept traditional pictures in games, even though they think of it as old-fashioned. On the other hand such topics deliver material for video games (Q45). Part of that are

16 http://www.igda.org/sites/default/files/IGDA_Survey_IGDA_Comments-on-Diversity_Jul05.pdf, 17.2.2013 – Link no longer active, 31.7.2015.

characters that are “redeemers” and “saviours” (Q50), which are helpful for the game development and are appreciated by the gamers, but - just like questions about the end times / apocalypses (Q49) - only can be imagined as structural elements of the game and not to be understood in their religious meaning.

Game developers are interested in subjects of society and politics - almost half of them even show interest in (Q5) questions about justice, war and peace or in the environment. Still only under a fifth are engaged actively in politics or society (Q20).

That questions of societal or cultural meaning can be implemented into games in a fun and informative way is accepted and believed by more than half of them: Almost 40% strongly believe so and almost a quarter of them can at least imagine of doing so depending on the games design (Q36).

There seems to be a broad willingness to implement their own opinions and views into games. Only a fraction repelled the idea, almost half could imagine doing so always or sometimes and designing games according to their own convictions (Q40).

H2: Game developers derive from their own target group. They mainly develop what they are interested in themselves. They want to entertain and do not want to influence their target audience with the product in a certain way. Next to providing an entertaining experience to the users, there is no interest in taking responsibility for them.

Video game developers are gamers themselves - the medium of choice since childhood, which most of them say has always been of interest to them. TV and movies, as well as books and other audio-visual media have been of great influence to today's developers. Rather insignificant were chat-rooms (Q1).

The prejudice of video gamers often staying at home, being unable to find a way out of their digital world, can only, if at all, be said about less than a third of the participants (Q2). Only a fifth regularly played alone (Q11) and only a fourth remembered their school time as unpleasant (Q3). About two thirds of the future game designers were sure about their career choices quite early (Q4).

A little less than 60% of the participants have let the experience of the video games distract them from real life problems in the past (Q9). The hypothesis that video games can influence, move and affect a human being the same way as a book or movie was met with overall approval (Q24).

Game developers mostly play: RPG's, adventure games and shooters (Q27).

Games influence the players. The developers think that games not only improve the players reactionary time but also assertiveness. But also “good”-deeds can be transferred as a pattern of behaviour into the real life. That this could change the character of an individual, they say, only happens at times or rarely. The wish to be entertained is always the main focus of the player (Q39).

That games can have a learning effect, is true for most of them and they are mostly aware of their role in creating the content (Q41). Half of them are aware that they have some form of “power” over the players and about a fifth admit that they have some kind of influence over them (Q59) which according to the developers mainly use games to pass time or even use this kind of media to learn things or get out of their normal role (Q54). Be it by the popular theme of saving the world or populating outer space (Q61).

Despite the very complex development tasks and own media know-how, the wish to be in contact with the target audience prevails for most of them. Almost two thirds are directly available to players criticism, only a minority wants to restrict that and wants to keep it limited to tech support (Q53).

H3: Game developers primarily feel compelled to their work. As development times get longer, more expensive and more complex developers are not really interested or critical regarding the intentions of their business.

If game developers play games themselves then, like their target audience, these are mostly set within science-fiction or fantasy (Q18) settings. The questions regarding the most popular genres shows that there is difference between them and the players: they estimate that especially shooters, RPG's and strategy games are popular. They think that the adventure games that they prefer are not as interesting to the end user as to them. According to the developers games with social or societal matters are also met by big interest (Q23).

How is the personal wish to work in the gaming industry displayed and how is the relation between developers and clients viewed?

The creative aspect of their work seems to be especially important, as well as the prospect of “inspiring people”, to come up with good stories in a creative field which are told through the medium of video games is one of the main motives of the developers-to-be. To change the world or do other influential and enduring things is a wish only less than half of the participants have. Liberty and “action” in the job is something more than half are hoping for. Interestingly money doesn't seem to be a big motivator (Q22).

Developers are realists when it comes to the necessity of having foreign influences becoming part of their production. Most of them are open to suggestions from colleagues as well as requests by clients (Q29). We can see this being confirmed in the control question that asks about the degree of “liberty” they are looking for in development: Here 30.8% of them are ok with foreign influence and 13.5% are willing to submit to them. Less than a fifth expects and wants total creative freedom when developing a game (Q30). The Genre of “indie games”, independent productions which come close to author's film, lacking the external financial support of business clients, allows the most unlimited creative freedom. The participants appreciate indie games but are also aware that having

an investor with financial backing is necessary for creating a quality product. Only a minority values creative freedom over money (Q32).

Even though and political subjects are possible themes in certain game genres i.e. role play games (Q62), having a political party or religious group as a client is very unlikely to most. But there is an exception for certain religious groups: traditional churches are very opposed, but “interesting” (for the sake of oddity?) religions such as Buddhism or nature churches could be possible partners. Almost 20% can indeed imagine to work for religious organisations, here the protestant and catholic churches dominate as well as judaic unions, thereafter islamic. A minority is open for assignments by the scientology church (Q57: “imaginable” 6.1%, “good idea” 4.1%).

Similar results were discovered regarding political parties as business clients (Q55). Again most would refuse to work for political parties, but still there is some support for it, although this support varies depending on what party would be the potential client. Most would work for “The Pirates” (42.6%) and “The Greens” (26.1%), the German political mainstream with SPD, CDU and FDP gets very little support (each around 15%). The left and right spectrum of the scale are (if viewed on their own) represented by only a minority of the participants - although 6.7% could be open to work for the Linkspartei (left wing party / formed from the former GDR-state party SED) and more than 10% for right-wing conservative or extreme parties (Republikaner 6.4% and NPD 4.3%) - showing that there is some willingness to work for the political outsiders (Q55).

A refusal to work for religious groups and political parties is very explicit. The accountability for one’s product and how it effects the players, which is mostly recognised and respected (Q51), is visible in the answers. Especially because game developers know (but personally refuse) that games can be used for propaganda (Q56) and that fictional game characters could convey religious (and political) ideologies to the player (Q52), especially when the player is active and bound to do certain things such as performing rituals, procedures and actions (Q63).

H4: Video games are mainly technical entertainment products to the developers. They don't see them as a cultural contributor to society. Topics of video games are not of interest to society.

Are video games technical products or part of our presence-culture? Directly asking this question caused quite some inconclusiveness with the participants (Q14), but the question whether video games are relevant to culture when compared with books and movies the result was far more distinct: more than two thirds fully agree and only a minority is reluctant or wants to see the question connected to a certain game (Q25).

Whether it's social issues such as exclusion, same-sex relations or disability, these subjects are possible themes to most of them. Only a minority thinks that they are too difficult to implement (Q46).

After we already discovered how developers think about influencing players, they are more reluctant when answering to the question on how much they influence societal, cultural and social processes. Fundamentally most of the new developers think that societal discourses can be inspired, initiated, and accompanied by video games. But they doubt players would be open and interested enough to find such topics mentioned in games (Q60).

To what extent do video games have to comply to the users and watch out for their cultural profile? Are games static offerings that, once they are designed and produced, are ready for the market or do they receive cultural awareness? Most developers have the understanding that players view games as an entertainment-offer that they can leave or take the way it is - it doesn't have to be altered according to cultural or ethical arrangements. A fifth believes that players willingly submit to the rules of the game. Not even a third affirms that games have to be culturally understandable and adaptable to a wider variety of gamer-cultures (Q34).

8 Conclusion

The survey and its results above could only be displayed heavily abridged, but still is hopefully able to give a unique insight into the minds of young game developers, even though it is not representative, or does it claim to be. Clues as to continuity, regarding the self-evaluation by developers are found in comparison to interviews with other industry employees and the other (older) surveys and studies. Following basic results can be deepened and refined in future surveys that hopefully happen on a larger scale:

- a) The questioned game design students (which are the future of the German video game industry) are mainly male (Q 65: 76.6%, female 23.4%) and young (Q 64; 75.5% between 19-27). Politically, societally and religiously most of them are inactive, but come (if) from a Christian denomination or were socialised by the Christian-connoted but secular society - other religious influences were not detected.
- b) The developers-to-be made their hobbies become their jobs; this makes them children, but also creators, of media worlds. They acknowledge that the result of their work is taking part in forming the cultural environment. And they realise that they have, like other people engaged in the cultural sector, some form of influence over the end user, which is important to them. The same way they acknowledge the guide lines that investors set them. They want personal and artistic liberty, but accept influences from colleagues and employers.

- c) Game developers consistently reject working for political parties or religious groups but accept and know that they need content from religion and politics that they then implement into their games. A majority consciously declines to put messages (“propaganda”) into their games. Only a minority is willing to do so.
- d) Game developers identify themselves with their job and the target group for which they produce. This becomes visible as they try to protect players from negative influences in their games.

Some questions were evaluated based on gender: In some cases, women collectively answered questions differently than men. As an example the question if developers could initiate social processes (Q60) - here women were more optimistic than men. That personal themes and values should flow into the games production (Q40) was met with more reservation by them. That games could impress players (Q24) is far more likely to be conceivable to women, but both genders mostly believe this to be true. Women were more likely to reject questions about personal belief and questions about God (Q16). It is men that were more likely to confess to it; although the feedback was generally higher with men. Same goes for personal interest in religion (Q6): disinterest is prevalent here, but less so with women than men. Furthermore women vote similarly on the subject of responsibility of developers to their audience (Q51), if social themes are arrangeable in video games (Q46) and how far individual liberty is needed for creative work (Q30).

What do all these answers tell us now? How come some responders thought questions about religion (also homosexuality in the IDGA-survey) were to be taken personally and that such questions were even asked of developers at all made them upset and why did they not just jump to the next question or quit, but even took the time to distance themselves from “religious propaganda” in video games by flooding the comment section of the survey and accuse the survey of trying to implement such “religious propaganda” in games?

Religion, emotions and sexuality are common subjects in entertainment productions as they are elements of discussions in society. Traditionally they have a tendency to bonding and polarisation as it has been visible. It is amazing to see that these themes concerning the emotional and cognitive area are met with such harsh reactions by some developers, which should be supposed to - having a certain higher education, an intercultural focus and analytical skills - be able to discuss these subject unbiased.

As there has been no deep psychological evaluation done, this observation can be registered but only viewed as such and not be further evaluated. Schachtner tried to explain: maybe some of the developers that were questioned by her largely accommodated to their job (“Anpassung an das Maschinenmodell” – “Alignment to the pattern of machine”) and tried to distance themselves from certain external situations and stimuli which would irritate and yet at the same time restrict and cut

their world within (Schachtner 1993, 210). The “Maschinenlogik” (“Logics of the machine”) may serve to them as a pattern of behaviour, which protects them from unknown situations, so that there is no danger of becoming emotionally involved or be forced to give a statement (Schachtner 1993, 211).

How else could the strong wish to entertain others and work creatively be explained? Söder-Mahlmann quotes Lasch, who said that “the modern narcissism” could not survive without an admiring audience. His apparent liberty from familiar responsibilities and institutionalised constraints sadly doesn't enable him to stand on his own feet or celebrate his individuality; they only contribute towards his own uncertainty, which can only be overcome by seeing himself reflected in others attention (Söder-Mahlmann 1991, 194). Similar to the way Blackburn explains the selfie-boom (Blackburn 2014).

The rejection of certain themes may also be possible to explain with societal opinion-multiplicators which tend to disregard religious subjects as un-modern or discredit them altogether. But the “Left Behind” and “Resident Evil”-franchises hint at the potential that games have both for enthusiastic fans as well as for conflicts.

One can only hope that inter-religious and inter-cultural as well as awareness of historical and political research is implemented into the education of new developers to the video game industry, so that misconceptions like the “Capcom”-case can be prevented in the future.

As Grossman's interviews and many individual games show, religion is an important part of many game-worlds and is used to add more depth to a game. As long as religious motifs aren't too strong, game developers show a distant curiosity with a positive note.

Game developers are independent acting and thinking individuals. They are specialists who often portray the ideas that others had and implement their own themes. Also true is: An attractive game can, in the hands of, or designed and financed by a potent political or religious group, pave way for influencing possibilities. It is the developers who are responsible for this and they are also the ones that could prevent it.

And the church? And educators? When it comes to the wide array of possibilities and implications, pedagogics as well as theology have not taken video games serious enough in the past, as they might have only been viewed as meaningless entertainment forms and / or not understood them fully enough, for these and other reasons. Maybe they were ignored because the communicative potential of this medium seemed suspect. Maybe game-designers have not been seen as credible partners to talk to and to work with.

That churches know of the importance of media-creators is visible in the number of broadcasting boards they are on. Only that cultural subjects are being formed somewhere else today.

Further studies need to be proceeded to deepen interest and the understanding of game-developers. They are a bunch of people who are often willing to spend much more time and power than they are paid for in the efforts to entertain yet other people.

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Biography

Prof. Dr. habil STEFAN PIASECKI teaches social work and media studies at the YMCA University of Applied Sciences in Kassel, and is also an advisor for the German movie and television age-rating board at FSK (Wiesbaden) and FSF (Berlin), with a research focus on interactive media, politics and religion.

His doctoral thesis, published in 2008 as *Schaufenster des Schreckens in den Tagen des Zorns* deals with the public reception of the dispute that arose out of the publishing of caricatures of the prophet Muhammad in a Danish newspaper. He has spent the first 12 years of his professional life as a producer in the international computer-games business followed by another 6 years within the public social administration.

Just recently his state doctorate about religion and world views in computer & video games was published: Piasecki, Stefan (2016): *Erlösung durch Vernichtung?! – Religion und Weltanschauung im Videospiel. Eine explorative Studie zu religiösen und weltanschaulichen Ansichten junger Spieleentwickler*, (State Doctorate / Habilitationsschrift), Kassel: Kassel university press, 1040 pages.

Stefan Piasecki
YMCA University of Applied Sciences
Hugo-Preuß-Str. 40
D – 34131 Kassel / Bad Wilhelmshöhe
Germany

www.socialmediastudies.net

www.stefanpiasecki.de

piasecki@cvjm-hochschule.de

stefanpiasecki@aol.com