Annotated reference

Bessiére, K. (2007). *The Ideal Elf: Identity Exploration in World of Warcraft*. [online] Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/6129328_The_Ideal_Elf_Identity_Exploration_in_World_of_Warcraft [Accessed 11 May 2017].

This paper was especially important in documenting the psychology behind the players of *World of Warcraft*. The author made important distinctions between player's actual selves, the character as a separate entity and what the participants considered their ideal self. The paper also made interesting links between these archetypes and the rate of depression or low self-esteem in the participants.

Bear, A. (2010). *Me, My Self, My Character, and I: Role-playing Identities in Ludic Space*. [online] Networkconference.netstudies.org. Available at: http://networkconference.netstudies.org/2010/04/me-my-self-my-character-and-i/

Ms. Bear's paper on how players represent themselves in a virtual setting makes excellent links between the avatar's success in game and how successful the player feels outside of it. The use of avatars in a group setting, for example questing as a team to take down a particularly tough enemy, is also mentioned and documents how people can not only represent themselves but socialise in virtual space. This paper also introduced to me the concept of safe, anonymous gameplay using the avatar as a front, where a player may never reveal their true name or identity and is only known by their character name/face.

Shea (2016). *How Popular Voice Actors Took A D&D Game Global With Critical Role*. [online] Game Informer. Available at: http://www.gameinformer.com/b/features/archive/2016/12/22/how-popular-voice-actors-took-dungeons-and-dragons-game-global-with-critical-role.aspx [Accessed 11 May 2017].

This article is important documentation on the effect player-created characters can have, not only on the player in question but on those who play with them. An important paragraph of note from the article was this:

When I ask Mercer why he thinks it has resonated with so many people, he laughs in be wilderment. "I don't know, man!" he says. "For a lot of older gamers who don't have the time to play anymore because of work and family and responsibilities, this is their kind of game-by-proxy. They can listen to the adventure like a radio play, or watch it and still feel like this is part of their own adventure, so this is an outlet for that thing they miss."

This section in particular highlighted how many people could fantasise about the sorts of adventures a player could have within the realm of a game, table-top or digital.

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Images

Fig. 1. Queen Elizabeth I, artist unknown.

Fig. 2. *Fallout 4* (2016)

Fig. 3. *World of Warcraft* (2004).

Fig. 4. Geek & Sundry's *Critical Role* (2015).