



This is a screenshot of myself, Deathx, on my Soul of Aspects, dragon.

I woke up one Saturday morning and got on my computer. I knew I had to finish this one personal quest I made for myself in World of Warcraft because I was so close to getting to level 20. I thought to myself, “Level 20! Finally I will be able to learn how to ride a mount!” I logged onto my account and entered the world. I was right outside of Silvermoon City, which was the main city for blood elves<sup>1</sup>, which was my race. I looked at my exp bar<sup>2</sup> and noticed that my exp was at the halfway mark to getting to level 20. I summoned my pet bat and set off to the rider master to continue my quest to defeat giant spiders in order to get the exp I needed to get to level 20. I had to fly to Felwood to the location where the enemies were the same level as mine.

Once I got there, I ran all the way to the location and began to slay my spider enemies one by one until my exp bar hit its max and I leveled up to 20. Once I saw that shining light and the words “Level 20” I quickly used my Hearthstone<sup>3</sup> to transport me back to Silvermoon City. Once I arrived I ran outside the city and towards where I learn how to ride. I learned how to ride and since I bought a mount in advance, I went to my mail and got my Winged Guardian, which was a winged lion. I equipped this mighty beast and finally, I would look higher and more powerful to the other players.

<sup>1</sup> - Blood elves, also known as Sin-dorei in Thalassian, (“Children of the blood”), is a race composed of former high elves who named themselves in honor of their people who were killed during the siege of Quel’Thalas by the Scourge during the Third War.

<sup>2</sup> - Exp is short for experience gained in order to level up your character to the next level.

<sup>3</sup> - Hearthstone is the stone that you right click on to transport you back to your home location (For example: Silvermoon City which is the capital city for the blood elves) or wherever you decide to make your home location.



This is a screenshot of myself, Deathx, on my Winged Guardian.

“World of Warcraft,” or mainly know as WoW, is a multiplayer online role-playing game (MMORPG) by Blizzard Entertainment. “World of Warcraft,” as of 2010, was known to have more than 12 million subscribers and holds the Guinness World Record for world’s largest and most popular MMORPG game. Blizzard is also continuing further development throughout its franchising, other than online media, such as: novels, comics, mantas, RPG books, TCG (Trading Card Games), and board-games.

I am passionate about playing video-games. The history of video-games can travel far back in time to the early 1950s where academics began to design simple games and simulations. Even though the popularity of video games did not start to form until the 1970s and 1980s, now, in 2014, there are a huge variety of different games with so many details involved in making them. Creating games involves time, work, money, people, materials, and software. Many successful game making companies have their team which includes a variety of people who create different parts and aspects of each game. One of the main parts of creating a game is the characters and stories behind those characters. That is what I would like to focus on in this project. I will be focusing my research on the aspects of character development in video games.

When I think of characters and video-games, I think of it as being a sanctuary for my soul and mind. It brings me great joy to play games that have an interesting story behind it, or just very extraordinary looking characters that capture my attention. My personal favorite game right

now is “World of Warcraft.” “World of Warcraft” has been out for quite some time now, and I have always seen trailers for new extensions coming out and little clips of what is in the game, the graphics, and story. It always interested me, but I never seemed too into it that I would go and make an account on the spot and begin to play. But as time went by, I began to become more and more interested in the game and decided only a couple weeks ago that I would start playing. As I began to play, my liking of the game grew to living, then grew into a passion. I still don’t know all the aspects of WoW, but am gaining new friends that will help support me throughout my journey to becoming a great player.

When I first started to play this game, I was just trying to learn the ropes, but after seeing many different trailers for the new “World of Warcraft,” I became fixated and eager to get started. When I went on and was about to pick what character I was going to be, I focused on what each character looked like, what came with the character (personality and specialty) and then chose one that best reflects myself personally.



Above is a screenshot of my character, Deathx. I am a blood elf-hunter who has the capability to train creatures around the world to be my pets and help me win battles and quests. My current pet is a Hydra that I keep because he fights battles very well and with all his strength side by side with me. I am level 91 now and the maximum level in “World of Warcraft” is 100, but it changes with each expansion. The latest expansion pack is Warlords of Draenor that just came out pretty recently and I am one of the many who has purchased it.

When I play games I play them for the pleasure of playing them, not to rule over everyone else. Many people that I know who play video-games are very competitive. I see that quality as very unattractive, ruthless, and unnecessary. I believe that one should play games for enjoyment. Even if I am level 20 while a lot of other players are levels above me, I never see it as a reason why I should do everything in my power to become better than them. It is all about

the process of learning, and the enjoyment that comes from playing. Each quest a player chooses has a story behind it. Those stories always intrigue me. Does each quest connect with the entire game? There are so many stories to each race in World of Warcraft. Each player creates a story for himself or herself. That is what I am going to be doing in this project. I am going to create a character of my own and give it a story.

I am very drawn to video-games and creating characters of my own. I love to use my imagination and draw whatever is on my mind. I remember when I was younger I always loved to draw dragons and fantasy creatures; I always find them so fascinating. When I research pictures of dragons or unicorns, I see others' artwork and how different every single one of them looked. There has been long-term research and series of projects done on RPG's (Role-Playing Games) that include studies on the therapeutic and educational aspects of role-playing games. There has also been research done to determine the casualties related to participation in role-playing gaming. Their research includes tracking any other projects around the world that use role-playing games as educational or therapeutic intervention modalities.

After reading this article, I believe this non-profit industry will indeed be very interesting to see the research that they get from RPG's and the people they study who play the games. It is very interesting to notice how games, and in this case role-playing games, and how they affect the human mind and how it also helps people out if they are either depressed or have some other trauma. Playing games, such as "World of Warcraft," helps my-well being because if I am either stressed out or overwhelmed in some way, I am able to turn to games for help. Once I begin to play them, I instantly feel signs of relief. Another program that is researching the outcomes of playing video games is Entertainment Arts and Engineering (EAE). "Children that undergo cancer treatment show decreased physical strength and endurance. This is coupled with increased fatigue and depression, when compared to peers without cancer. Play is essential for providing healthy escape for children as well as allowing them to adapt to changes and express their feelings. This is significantly different for children affected by cancer." EAE is trying to have children with cancer become more empowered again and once they get their strength and will back, they will be able to fight the cancer with strength. This really intrigued me and made me have full faith in the children who are fighting cancer, and want to support them throughout their journey and battle.

Video-games and storytelling combine to make games. Every game I play or see any YouTuber play has an interesting story behind it. In my opinion, it is a necessary feature to have in every video or computer game. A story is "the abstract notion of a narrative within a video game, either written by the player or by the developer." I believe that all games should have a story or there would be no meaning or point to playing the game. People are not just attracted to the amazing graphics; they are attracted to the story of the game. That is the main aspect of a game that draws one in.

Why are video games important? Many people, including myself, play games for entertainment. I use them to escape reality in a way and go to a place of comfort and make new friends in the game and have social gatherings with people who share the same interests. When first starting a game, there are many different races and characters to choose from. Personally for me, I choose a character that best reflects that of myself. Playing video-games for some are empowering. Empowering is being able to feel stronger and more confident in oneself, especially in controlling one's life in their own way.

What are the dangers? Many people, especially parents of kids who love video games, think that they can be addictive. There are a lot of pretty violent games out in the world that can

change people's brain chemistry and can end up affecting people's psyche to either become depressed, suicidal, or violent. Some people even begin to lack empathy. Some other negatives of video-games are: they can confuse the player of what's reality and what's fantasy; teach kids wrong values; are addictive; academic achievement may be negatively related over time; bad language and behavior; impulsive behavior; and some start showing signs of attention problems.

I remember when my mom told me that some guy got so affected by video games that he went and killed people because he just thought he could and had the "power" to do so. This was a little bit ago when I was younger than I am now, and it really surprised me that video-games could change someone to the extent that they become a savage, reckless person who goes around and kills people just because they saw it in a video-game they played.

I believe that video-games, mainly certain types of video-games are important to teenagers because it gives them a chance and a place to go if they really need to have space from reality and to go into a virtual fantasy that is always enjoyable. Also, it is important to be aware of the casualties and dangers of certain video-games, mainly the violent types because it could lead to one being depressed, or worse. Even if there are some aspects of gaming that are in a way dangerous to some who play them, there is more of a positive side of games. Personally for me, it gives me the chance to be myself, become empowered, and become a whole different person, a fictional character, and a queen of my own world.



This is a screenshot of myself, Deathx, on my Swift Purple Wind Rider.

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