A game of pawns
Fan-made content and resistance in online video game communities
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Publication date
2022

Citation for published version (APA):

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Conclusion

In the past, it was claimed that user-generated content is integral to contemporary interactions between companies and consumers because, through online technologies, consumers can create communities that can resist companies and even compete against them (Lee 3-4). It has been shown that what was believed then about some of the early online technologies is still very relevant and applies to video games as well, although perhaps under different conditions. Given that resistance in video games can diverge from other technological activities, I would like to list a number of additional issues that might be viewed through different lenses, thereby leading to future research that could support the understanding of online video game fan communities and the industry.

Further Research

In their critique of cultural homogenisation, Bertha Chin and Lori Hitchcock Morimoto, present examples of fan resistance in order to prove how fans like or express various fandoms in different ways (95). One of their examples is the artwork made by fans of Hong Kong star Leslie Cheung, which incorporates various aspects of Japanese art (100). Factors such as constructions of gender and nationality indeed play a role in the audience’s reception and appropriation of media (Chin and Hitchcock Morimoto 93). The cases under examination here all also (mainly) use the English language, but there are instances that indicate the existence of different perceptions of language and, possibly, culture. For example, fans of the AVGN series have re-uploaded episodes that feature Spanish subtitles supplied by fans, while PUBG players from specific ethnic backgrounds form alliances and use cultural-specific symbols to express their identity. Research investigating how fans from non-English speaking backgrounds or fans who do not self-identify as cis male, straight, and white, participate in fandoms has the potential to unveil lesser-known areas of fan cultures.

A very important topic that has attracted the attention of researchers is addiction (Goggin, “Gaming/Gambling” 2008; Bean et al. 2017; Stockdale and Coyne 2018). For decades, writers warned of the dangers of addiction that video gaming seemingly poses (Crawford 48). Video games are designed to make gamers remain engaged and generate
more profit for developers and publishers. Even though this study is not about gameplay per se, but rather about the communities around it, traces of habitual activities, which could be classified as addiction-related, exist in such cultures. The need for fans to consume audiovisual artefacts and the constant search for new sources of similar content is saturated with online algorithms that supply fans with similar or related content. Following from the reference to addiction made in Chapter V, I believe further research on how the industry creates and supplies addiction, along with how video game cultures deal with it, could be as enlightening as those about addiction in gaming.

E-Sports are also worthy of further investigation. Although e-sports are not the focus of this dissertation, when examined from a different perspective, e-sports may also produce important data about player-to-player and player-to-industry interaction.

And, finally, a sector in need of further exploration is that of the leader. In my dissertation, I have shown that transformative works also transform people. Those who find their work appropriated and celebrated online invariably undergo a status transformation in their community. Therefore, research further examining changes to the subjective perception of self and of leaders would add more to our understanding of fan communities.

The Importance of Techno-literacy

This dissertation has shown how digital entertainment audiences, and especially video game audiences, can make their creativity more mainstream and influence the industry to an extent. Indeed, it is fairly common that producers were themselves fans and made the transition to makers (Toepfer 35-36), precisely because of their participation in a culture that allows for fan input and the promotion of fans to industry insiders.

For this reason, fans and consumers of online platform services would do well to become more aware of how the industry functions. Matt Hills supports the idea that more techno-literacy results in more fruitful critique of digital forms of power and their capitalist agendas (“Fan Doxa” 121). Nevertheless, after observing fan communities on the Internet, I would agree that fans’ opinion of a company’s relationship with its fan base may be one of

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66 Some games may not be designed with the profit objective, such as art or educational games. But most of video games are designed in order to keep gamers occupied and generate earnings for the companies that made them.
indifference, irony, or it may even be affirmational and sympathetic because some fans may not be at all critical of company strategies. Moreover, not all fans object to company appropriation of their free labour and care little that a company may grow richer at their expense. Therefore, the participants in the digital entertainment landscape—video games included—be it fans, community leaders, or aspiring entrepreneurs need to understand the ways the system thrives and how resistance works.

**Resistance and the Utopia**

In *Convergence Culture*, Henry Jenkins predicted a world wherein grassroots and corporate media would come together, and producers and consumers would interact (259-260). Jenkins’s vision is optimistic: users make their own meanings and content and retain access to channels of mass communication, while corporations listen to their suggestions, bringing all sorts of media creation—amateur and professional—together. This might seem an ideal and idealistic scenario, and since we remain far from that vision, so such optimism should be approached with skepticism (Crawford 122).

Jenkins’s book was published in 2006, when user-generated content was still hailed as the next revolution on the media and entertainment landscape. User-generated content was used frequently in activist movements and politics, earning the label of one “of the most powerful forces in pop culture” (Mason 70). Therefore, fandom may indeed serve as a way for followers of a shared interest to express their preferences, creativity, and—occasionally—mount resistance tactics against institutions and events they do not support. However, since fan communities are composed of human beings who participate in society, it is expected that inequalities, hierarchies, and conflict exist. Denizens of online communities might constantly disagree, clash, and exploit each other, but that does not change the fact that co-creation and participation may be laudable goals.

**The Continuous Presence of Resistance on Unequal Terrain**

Is resistance somehow inherent to the video game industry? Looking back to gaming’s origins in the Western world, its resistive roots become evident. Computer software development owes a great deal to groups of left-wing, antiwar activists, who saw computers as social machines that could fight the system (Mason 143-144). Stephen Kline et al. wrote extensively
about how some of the early video game entrepreneurs started their careers as programmers who wanted to hold out against their workload at various governmental and official positions, so they began developing games as a means to spend their spare time (84-88). This is why authors such as Leopoldina Fortunati have claimed that games have been part of resistance practices and not a cornerstone of capitalistic tendencies (302). Equally, video game-related fan productions such as mods, videos, and online walkthroughs, are based on the foundational principle of freedom. However, companies soon enough saw an opportunity for harvesting and using these products of freedom for their own benefit: a typical industrial practice (Dyer-Witherford and Peuter 23; Nieborg, "Triple-A" 126).

Much like punk music, games originated as a resistive force; yet a force that later went along with the system that it opposed in the first place. Matt Mason writes that some punk icons were also actively part of the capitalistic system in order to spread their message to a wider audience, noting that sometimes profit trumps purpose (19-26). Sometimes, this also occurs in gaming cultures. Moreover, all games do not oppose the system; on the contrary, they are the products and users thereof. Hence, what starts as a wave of resistance might be swiftly dissipated, and content makers must sometimes compromise principles in order to reach a wider audience.

Fans who become entrepreneurs may also be seen as infiltrators; that is, as having provided their own meanings in the digital entertainment landscape and having entered that domain in order to resist from the inside. However, it is not easy to move the industry and make significant changes, and the belief that people oversee their economic destiny, including their ability to make a significant impact if they only try, is a familiar neoliberal notion (Hong 989-990). This notion is also cultivated by the gaming industry and corporations that promote the belief that fans are in charge of shaping the industry. Gaming corporations, however, do indeed control the games landscape and are thoroughly neoliberal in their goals. In the neoliberal model to which industry subscribes, fans are a commodity and exploitable for data mining and as human capital. Moreover, infiltrators may succeed and end up working for the industry they admired as regular fans, while resistance in terms of significantly changing the industry may never have been on their agenda. Likewise, when fans create artefacts, they often do it for their own enjoyment rather than impact, while still enjoying being credited as makers of a mainstream artefact.
Throughout *The Practice of Everyday Life* (1984), Michel de Certeau describes how resistance is essential to everyday human existence. For de Certeau, even the most ordinary person is capable of production and reconfiguration of norms. In the three cases studies of this thesis, I have shown how three everyday people—three consumers of popular culture—resisted the standard and preset meanings of their cultures, thus transforming themselves and changing the perception of their identity. They also endeavoured, consciously or unconsciously, to alter the industry itself, although the industry found ways to absorb them and turn their resistance into company profits. Despite the same “battle” taking place again and again, the terrain of media control is indeed unequal (Jenkins, “Textual Poachers” 33). Resistance is a struggle that might never be won and is doomed to repeat itself indefinitely, yet damage can perhaps be minimised, and raising awareness about fannish labour is an important goal in itself.

**Collaboration or Exploitation: A Recurring Dilemma**

Capitalism has infiltrated and commodified imagination, emotion, and affect, and has taken advantage of cultural activities that project playfulness (Fortunati 297, 299). By following online fan communities, media company officials have access to a focus group and can mine new perspectives for their products (Ford, “Fans of Fans” 2006). I believe companies ought to understand the value of collaborating with—instead of exploiting—fans and content makers, yet audiences are frequently perceived as an abstraction or even a nuisance (Ford, “Listening and Empathizing” 275), whereas greater and more effective efforts might be undertaken with the purpose of encouraging the companies to listen and cater to fans’ needs. Some fans may well act in ways classified as renegade or unwanted, but effective community management, which sees fans as people and not numbers, could solve many problems. Moreover, company officials could converse more openly with their fan base, earn their trust, and even be seen as one of the fans (Guerrero-Pico 2075). Provided they remember their fandom roots, fans who become company officials can engage in fruitful and beneficial exchange for both parties.

Kline et al. also note the usefulness of gaming industry officials better understanding their audiences (296). But in contemporary entertainment industries, video game company executives are interested in profit, so they direct their followers to specific trends rather than empowering them, and notions of free agent gamers remain utopian (Kline et al. 296).
According to Paul Booth (“Fandom In/As the Academy” 2010), fan communities are defined by elements of participation and democracy, yet democratic elements that might possibly arise in new media forms are mostly accidental, while the industry retains an oligarchic form of control (T.L. Taylor 258). Similar to casino games, the “dealer” has the advantage, and the house always wins.

In 2020, moreover, a very interesting development occurred in the video game industry. Epic Games, the studio behind the immensely successful game *Fortnite*, is engaged in a legal battle against Apple and Google. The companies’ disagreement concerns profit cuts from Apple’s App Store and Android’s Google Play Store, the two online stores in which *Fortnite* was available for download (Gurwin 2020). Epic was unhappy with Google and Apple’s percentage kept for in-game transactions on their stores and, therefore, implemented its own method of direct payments within the game, bypassing the two colossi and allowing players to pay Epic directly. As a result, both Google and Apple removed *Fortnite* from their stores. Now, Epic is attempting to reinstate its game and has employed the fans to do so, through a campaign that involves asking fans to download and print logos from the *Fortnite* website with the hashtag #FreeFortnite and use them on items such as shirts and stickers. The company also encourages fans to sell their self-made #FreeFortnite merchandise, and all ostensibly in an effort to protest against Google and Apple (Gurwin 2020).

In this example of inter-industrial resistance, it is evident that even big companies are under the powerful grip of colossi. What makes this case yet more remarkable is the fact that fans are being “recruited” into a confrontation between companies fighting over profits (and not in-game narrative). Epic has found a way to make their issue an issue for fans as well, and to present itself as a modern-day David fighting a Goliath.

Should Epic manage to bring about change in either Apple or Google’s policy, it could be the harbinger of still greater change for the industry in the future. Indeed, whether Epic is really concerned about a shift in policy that would benefit the industry or acting in Epic’s interests alone, this case will impact the strategies of some of the most powerful companies now operating and the limits they impose on the parties working for them.\(^\text{67}\) Regardless of

\(^{67}\) This is, however, not the first time a video game company has managed to pressure a bigger company to change its policy. EA applied pressure on Sega in 1989 and succeeded in becoming official partners, by revealing that EA had managed to reverse engineer the Sega Genesis system and could release unlicensed games (Pappas 2020).
the outcome, whatever change occurs, the activity of fans will be part of it, although the extent to which the labour of fans is recognised and rewarded remains to be seen. Epic’s genuine concerns for others remain questionable, and a desire to shift policies for the benefit of others is not explicitly stated in their campaign. It may, then, be safe to conclude that there is nothing “epic” about a company asking fans to fight its battles.

Game Over? No, Game On!

Black Mirror episode “Fifteen Million Merits” depicts a society in which people are surrounded by screens and constantly bombarded by entertainment programmes and games. At the same time, many citizens must work tirelessly, pedalling stationary bicycles that generate energy, while viewing media entertainment and earning points—merits as they are called—which they can exchange for goods. Bing (Daniel Kaluuya), the protagonist, angered with the exploitation of workers in this system, including a woman for whom he has feelings, and who is made to work in the porn industry, amasses a large quantity of merits and exchanges them for a ticket to participate in a nationwide talent show. When it is his turn to perform on live television, Bing delivers a monologue criticising the exploitative system and threatens to slice his neck with a shard of glass. Impressed by his resistive “performance,” the judges of the talent show reward Bing with a TV show of his own. On his show, Bing discusses exploitation, injustice, and everything that troubles and enrages him in this Huxleian society of mindless entertainment; and he now has a bigger room and more money. The system he lives in continues to thrive as he and everyone else keep on feeding it with more input. This fictious depiction of a capitalist society based on entertainment and labourious play is not much different from the scenarios of fans trying to make a transition in the industry only to be absorbed by it.

While describing an alternative to capitalism, Mark Fisher explains that anti-capitalism should be global, authentic, and opposed to specific forms of control (79). Since the gaming industry is by nature capitalist, change will only occur as a wave of resistance. While this new wave must be global and authentic, it must also be opposed to traditional forms of exploitation found in the gaming industry. Based on Hardt and Negri’s Empire, Nick Dyer-Witheford and Greig de Peuter describe a transnational system, in which corporations and institutions also participate. In its current mode, industry is kept alive by the products of
immaterial labour—communication and information—although the labour remains very real. In such a system, social life is undermined and exploited from numerous sources, while capital is created (xix-xx). Dyer-Witheford and de Peuter believe that this model defines video games, making them imperial media and constitutive of hypercapitalism; yet they also believe that games can be the answer (xxix). But how?

With the recent acceleration of activist movements in gaming, including the rise of indie games and the increase of LGBTQ+ representation and content, fans can expect much from smaller groups outside of mainstream, capitalist circles. As Jesper Juul wrote in 2019 (qtd. in Kunzelman 2020), the indie scene shows that there can be games that do not share the values of the general culture and can present an alternative “something” in a system dominated by very specific capitalist aesthetics and rhetoric. For example, Cameron Kunzelman (2020) discusses how indie studio ZA/UM praised Marx and Engels in their speech at the 2019 Game Awards in Los Angeles. By doing so, the makers showed that they are aware of the two thinkers and potentially encourage incorporating their ideas in the games, while also raising awareness of Marx and Engels in the audience. Even more recently, during the E3 livestream of 2021, a panel hosted by Take-Two Interactive featured members from organisations such as Girl’s Make Games and Games for Change, and focused on issues including diversity, equity, and social impact.

The term *indie* is associated with games outside the big games market, often made by small companies without major financial backup and aiming at a particular audience. However, defining what constitutes an indie game is complicated by the varied definitions of the term used by fans. What we know, though, is that *indie* stands for *independent*, and that the name connotes independence from a larger system: the video game industry in this case. Indie games are also part of the industry, yet they can create new understandings of how the industry works and can be, at times, used as answer to mainstream capitalism (something that publisher Devolver Digital is known to do with their series of videos parodying traditional profit models by bigger companies). Even if companies themselves do not become more empathetic towards their audiences, a new wave of designers are more than willing to champion resistance and, hopefully, work towards setting new trends.

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68 E3 is one of the biggest trade events dedicated to video games, during which multiple companies showcase their newest games. The 2020 and 2021 editions took place online.
Unfortunately, this change does not appear to always affect the bigger “players” of the system. Mejeur et al. call for awareness about the disproportionate labour in the gaming industry and how women and marginalised people are most often tasked with bringing change (344). Although diversity workers have been reported to be retooled into “a non-threatening neoliberal product” (Mejeur et al. 352), I do believe it possible, under the right circumstances of awareness about the industry’s functions, for a bigger change to occur. While indie games are still part of the industry, they can also create new understandings of how the industry works, as a reply to the mainstream capitalist market. They can also raise awareness, while looking for ways to empower their fans and show appreciation.

On the indie scene there are also games that address issues that customarily go neglected such as depression (Depression, Presented Ludically, In The Form Of A Videogame) or gender dysphoria (Dys4ia), or that put minorities in the forefront (All Our Asias). Through the audience’s engagement with independent, alternative games, all the aforementioned awareness and empowerment may occur. Leaders and smaller studios can sensitise their audiences to various issues through their work, and fans can become more critical of the ways industry works, while resisting game-related jingoism. Realising our obligations and our approach to games should lead to a much-needed reconstruction of gaming cultures (Paul 8). The field of indie gaming is where I would expect a genuine change in the gaming industry to commence. Resistance, after all, happens not only from without, but also from within.
Afterword

I began this dissertation by likening the position of fans to pawns in a game of chess that strive to promote themselves. Like a pawn that can “level up” and become a stronger piece, some fans undergo transformation, and later perceive their own subjecthood through a different lens. The issue at hand remains that only some “players” define the game by making use of the pawns. In this case, it is the companies that move the pieces, and they are deeply invested in the current neoliberal capitalist paradigm. In this regard, I am reminded of one of my favourite—also chess-related—songs, *To Skaki* (2014) by Greek band, Oute Sponda. One of the lyrics goes: “But if you sit down and think about it/ It all happens in order to satisfy the belly of the king.”69 It has always been thus: pawns do a great deal of the work, while the controllers sit idly by and enjoy the fruits of the pawns’ labour. I want to close this thesis by pondering the admittedly utopian notion that some pawns might increasingly understand their situation and decide to play their own game rather than being played.

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69 Loose translation from Greek of the verse: “Μα αν καθίσεις και το ψάξεις γιατί γίνονται όλα αυτά/Όλα γίνονται για χάρη της κοιλιάς του βασιλιά.”
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A Game of Pawns


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Summary

A Game of Pawns: Fan-Made Content and Resistance in Online Video Game Communities

The focus of this project is tactics of resistance in online video game communities. I am interested in how these communities form and develop based on fan-made content, and what questions arise in terms of hegemony and power relations for all participants, namely the fans and the industry. The dissertation discusses issues, such as exploitation and gift economies, cultural resistance (based on Michel de Certeau’s strategies and tactics), and community fragmentation. To explore those issues, I selected three cases of fan communities that emerged around specific video game projects. All constitute projects that began as resistive, alternative readings by fans which were later absorbed by the gaming industry, making their creators parts of the video games manufacturing process. I followed the development and evolution of those projects for the entire duration of my research, while also interviewing their leaders for a more insightful approach. After analysing the data, I came to conclusion that platforms and tools used for the dissemination of productivity by fans are replete with monetisation techniques, usually benefiting the companies behind them.

Within those platforms there exists a framework for collaboration between fans and companies, but also for conflict. One of the reasons for conflict stems from fandom members trying to capitalise on their productivity within their communities. Whatever the case may be, the participation of fans in the entertainment industry can function as transformative for those involved and also for the forms of labour present in this era: people’s willingness to produce value voluntarily and the datafication of everything that provides the companies with valuable capital. Labour is potentially decommodified, and workers become participants, either as leaders or followers in an enormous, interconnected mediascape. In the end, however, the entertainment industry system seemingly invariably finds ways to capitalise on the effort of fans.

In Chapter I, I introduced my theoretical framework and basic concepts, also linking to Benedict Anderson’s notion of imagined communities and the audience categories proposed by Nicholas Abercrombie and Brian Longhurst. With said theory, I explained that online fan communities create a sense of togetherness, while also enabling participatory culture and resistance (based on de Certeau’s idea of “poaching”).
Chapter II was devoted to fan interaction with the video game industry, and how such activities might contribute to the shaping of a video game franchise. This chapter also looked at exploitation and to what happens when game companies oppose the activity of fans rather than collaborate with them. It was done so that it would open an avenue for introducing the concept of fans who become part of the system through their resistance.

Chapters III-V feature the three cases (the Angry Video Game Nerd series, the Twitch Plays Pokémon stream, and the PlayerUnknown’s Battlegrounds game, along with the online communities around them). I engage with their origins, rise, and eventual position in the industry, as all of them are products of the creativity of fans who later became community leaders and members of the industry. I highlighted the presence of resistance in the overall entertainment industry and its position in a larger discourse on hegemony in popular culture. The point I tried to make is despite these examples being perceived as empowering, it was the industry itself dictating their progress and evolution. Furthermore, I argued about the fact the opposition to leadership is an unavoidable factor in online fan communities, especially gaming-related ones.

Chapter V contains a comparative analysis of the three cases, followed by general observations. My aim in this comparative analysis was to highlight similarities and differences between the examined cases, and to define how these cases connect with poaching, resistance, and exploitation in contemporary, postmodern digital entertainment industries. My argument is that, in the end, despite that resistance, capitalist enterprises are too strong to be shaken and manage to overturn any opposition to their favour.

In my conclusion, I reflect more on the issue of exploitation found in the industry by showcasing additional issues located within the video game industry, while also presenting pathways for further research. Ultimately, I end that part by highlighting the importance of resistance along with a few ways that might render it eventually successful.
Samenvatting

A Game of Pawns: Fan-Made Content and Resistance in Online Video Game Communities

De focus van dit project ligt op de tactieken van weerstand in de online video game communities. Ik ben geïnteresseerd in hoe deze gemeenschappen zich vormen en ontwikkelen gebaseerd op door fans gemaakte inhoud, en welke vragen dit oproept wat betreft hegemonie en de machtsrelaties voor alle deelnemers, namelijk de fans en de game industrie. Het proefschrift stelt zaken ter discussie, zoals uitbuiting en cadeau economie, culturele weerstand (gebaseerd op Michel de Certeaus strategieën en tactieken) en de fragmentatie van gemeenschappen. Om deze thema’s te onderzoeken heb ik drie voorbeelden van fan communities geselecteerd die ontstaan zijn rondom verschillende videogame projecten. Allemaal projecten die begonnen zijn als resistief, alternatieve interpretaties van fans die later geïncorporeerd zijn door de game industrie, waardoor de bedenkers deel uit zijn gaan maken van het productieproces van videogames. Ik heb de ontwikkeling en ontplooiing van deze projecten gevolgd gedurende de gehele periode van mijn onderzoek, en ik heb ook de leiders ervan geïnterviewd om meer inzichten te verkrijgen. Na de data geanalyseerd te hebben, ben ik tot de conclusie gekomen dat platforms en gereedschappen die gebruikt worden om de door fans gecreëerde inhoud te verspreiden vol zitten met technieken om inkomsten te genereren, voornamelijk ten bate van de bedrijven.

Deze platforms creëren een kader waarbinnen fans en bedrijven samen kunnen werken, wat soms tot conflict leidt. Een van de oorzaken voor conflict zijn de fans die proberen hun content binnen hun gemeenschap te gelde te maken. Hoe het ook zij, de deelname van fans aan de entertainment industrie kan transformatief zijn voor de betrokken partijen en hierdoor ontstaat een nieuwe, moderne vorm van arbeid door de bereidheid van mensen om vrijwillig inhoud te creëren en de datafication van alles, wat de bedrijven waardevol kapitaal oplevert. Arbeid is geen deel meer van winstbejag, en arbeiders/werknemers worden deelnemers, hetzij als leiders of volgers in een enorm, verweven mediasferschappen. Uiteindelijk vindt de entertainment industrie manieren om te kapitaliseren op de inspanningen van fans.

In Hoofdstuk I leid ik mijn theoretisch kader en fundamentele concepten in, waaronder Benedict Andersons begrip imagined communities, en de publiekscategorieën die zijn geïdentificeerd door Nicholas Abercrombie en Brian Longhurst. Aan de hand van deze
A Game of Pawns

theorieën zet ik uiteen hoe online fan communities een gevoel van saamhorigheid scheppen, en tegelijkertijd de basis vormen voor participatieve cultuur en vormen van verzet (gebaseerd op De Certeaus concept poaching).

Hoofdstuk II is gewijd aan interacties tussen fans en de videogame-industrie, waarbij ik de vraag stel hoe dergelijke activiteit bijdraagt aan de vorming van een videogamefranchise. In dit hoofdstuk besteed ik ook aandacht aan vormen van exploitatie, en aan gevallen waarin gamebedrijven zich tegen fans verzetten in plaats van met hen samen te werken. Het doel van dit hoofdstuk is om vorm te geven aan het idee dat fans door middel van verzet een onderdeel zijn geworden van het systeem.

In hoofdstuk III tot en met V behandel ik drie casussen: drie soorten media (de videoserie Angry Video Game Nerd, het streamkanaal Twitch Plays Pokémon, en het spel PlayerUnknown’s Battlegrounds) en de gemeenschappen eromheen. Ik beschrijf hun oorsprong, opkomst, en uiteindelijke positie in de industrie, omdat elk van deze media het product zijn van creatieve fans die later uitgroeiden tot leidende figuren in de gemeenschap, en tot leden van de game-industrie. Ik breng hierbij vormen van verzet in de entertainmentindustrie naar de voorgrond, en plaats deze in de context van breder discours over hegemonie in populaire cultuur. Hoewel deze voorbeelden vaak worden gezien als empowering, wil ik laten zien dat de industrie zelf uiteindelijk de beslissingen neemt. Een ander punt dat ik maak met deze voorbeelden is dat een zekere weerstand tegen leiderschap onvermijdelijk is in online fan communities, zeker in het geval van videogames.

Hoofdstuk V bevat daarnaast een vergelijkende analyse van de drie casussen, gevolgd door algemene observaties. Het doel van deze analyse is om te laten zien hoe de voorbeelden zich verhouden tot poaching, verzet, en exploitatie in hedendaagse digitale entertainmentindustrieën. Uiteindelijk is mijn oordeel dat kapitalistische ondernemingen te veel macht hebben om te worden ondermijnd door deze vormen van verzet, en er juist vaak in slagen om vormen van tegenstand in hun voordeel te gebruiken.

In mijn conclusie reflecteer ik verder over vormen van exploitatie in de videogame-industrie door enkele andere kwesties aan te halen, en mogelijke ideeën voor vervolgonderzoek voor te stellen. Hierbij denk ik ook na over de mogelijkheid van succesvolle vormen van verzet.