Skinhead Super Mario Brothers: An Examination of Racist and Violent Games on White Supremacist Web Sites

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This study uses qualitative interpretive textual analysis of video games found on hate and extremist Web sites to explore the proliferation of these games on the Internet and the extent they advocate violence and conflict or portray hate groups in a positive way to existing and potential members. In particular, this study examines the "enemies" targeted in these games and the level of violence directed toward these enemies. Results indicate the majority of games examined promoted extreme violence and conflict toward blacks and Jewish people. The games analyzed in this study required the player to violently kill, wound, and maim minorities in order to advance and were often modified versions of classic video games in which the original enemies were replaced with religious, racial and ethnic minorities. This study suggests that video games found on hate and extremist sites are intended to indoctrinate players with white supremacist ideology and allow individuals who already hold racist ideologies to practice aggressive scripts toward minorities which may later influence real world interactions.

Keywords: video games, extremists, web sites, hate, violence

INTRODUCTION

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When individuals first view the "Games" section on the White Aryan Resistance (WAR) Web site, resist.com, they see this warning at the top of the page. The warning is used as a First Amendment legal defense to protect WAR against legal action from anyone injured by those who visit the site or or those offended by the games and material included on the WAR site. The warning also informs individuals that the games on the site are not intended for children and that only those who are at least eighteen years of age, mature, and strong hearted should continue. The warning however also serves an additional purpose as it assuredly tantalizes browsers that the games on the site are violent and offensive to anyone who does not follow the beliefs of the White Aryan Resistance. The warning in effect, regardless of the quality of the games that follow, can be enticing enough to compel individuals to continue.

According to Zhou, Reid, Qin, Chen, and Lai (2005), there were 497 hate Web sites by domestic terrorist groups operating in the United States in 2003. But, according to the Southern Poverty Law Center, by 2007 the number had grown to 643 U.S.-based hate sites active on the Internet up from 566 in 2006 (2008). By 2008, the number of domestically based hate Web sites had dropped to 630, but the number of actual hate groups had risen from 888 in 2007 to 926 by 2008 (Southern Poverty Law Center, 2009a). These numbers indicate an astonishing increase in hate in the United States and on the Internet. The Southern Poverty Law Center classifies hate groups into the following categories: Ku Klux Klan, Neo-Nazi, White Nationalist, Racist Skinhead, Christian Identity, Neo-Confederate, Black Separatist, and General Hate (Southern Poverty Law Center, 2008). General Hate groups include "Anti-Gay groups, Anti-Immigrant groups, Holocaust Denial groups, Racist Music labels, Radical Traditionalist Catholic groups" and groups labeled as Other which endorse a

variety of "hate doctrines" (Southern Poverty Law Center, 2008, p. 52). All of these groups had Web sites in 2007 according to the Southern Poverty Law Center (2008) with White Nationalists having the most at 201.

The proliferation of sites explains why Zhou et al. (2005) argue that domestic hate groups "are using the Internet as a tool for facilitating recruitment, linking with other extremist groups, reaching global audiences, and spreading hate materials that encourage violence and terrorism" (p. 44). As examples, the individuals involved in the 1995 Oklahoma City Bombing and the June, 2009 shooting at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum frequented countless hate and extremist Web sites. It is because such individuals view these sites that Xu, Chen, Zhou, and Qin (2006) argue that monitoring extremist Web sites and studying their content may help to predict and prevent such attacks in the future.

A major goal for creating extremist Web sites however is to recruit and attract younger members, and one of the methods used to attract young people is the use of new media including video games. Williamson and Pierson argue that, "hate sites are diffuse rhetorical messages composed of symbolic artifacts that range in complexity from simple visual icons and arguments, to interactive video games" (2003, p. 251). Williamson and Pierson continue that "Video games are a form of virtual immersion that a child can participate in, and they therefore represent a uniquely insidious persuasive form that is intended to not only appease followers, but to gain new recruits" (2005, p. 255-256). In effect, by allowing an individual to immerse themselves in the role of Klan member or skinhead in a game makes the idea of being in the Klan, or a skinhead, a plausible reality for new recruits, while also potentially reinforcing the beliefs of current members.

It is important therefore for researchers to understand how extremist groups spread their views, and to do so requires studying these groups and their messages. Blazak (2001) argues that researchers need to identify the social dynamics that create environments where hate can spread, and by understanding how extremists recruit, strategies can be developed to combat their massage. Lee and Leets (2002) agree, adding that it is crucial for researchers to identify hate group strategies and empower people, and especially young people, with the skills to view hate material critically. This study uses qualitative interpretative analysis to explore this issue to better understand how violent and racist messages can be spread using video games on white supremacist Web sites.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The psychology of racism suggests that once racial inferiority is planted into the mind of an individual, repeated presentations of the message are absorbed into an individual's thought process, and interfere and cloud the perceptions' of the indoctrinated with racist ideas (Duffy, 2003). When these indoctrinated individuals interact with members of the group targeted by extremist messages, the interaction may involuntarily trigger learned hate responses (Duffy, 2003). The extremist rhetoric and messages can be particularly powerful when they are in the form of first-player video games where users can act out these violent messages. As Duffy (2003) argues, repeated exposure to racist and extremist messages, including those on the Internet and in video games, can foster racist thoughts and interactions. As an example, the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) reported that in January, 2009, "a white loner named Keith Luke," allegedly shot a black woman in Brockton, Massachusetts, and killed her sister and a black homeless man, reportedly after he

"arrived at his racial views purely through repeated visits over a six-month period to racist websites" (2009b). Randy Blazak, a professor of sociology at Portland State University, argued in the same article by the SPLC that while there is conflicting research linking "the viewing of violent images with real-world violence. The danger is in people who are already predisposed to racial violence" (Southern Poverty Law Center, 2009b). Therefore, for individuals who already have racist beliefs and are repeatedly exposed to racist images and messages, the messages could cultivate these racist beliefs and lead to violence.

Traditionally, extremist groups were limited in spreading their message because of a lack of resources, and instead used AM or shortwave radio, public access channels, and print materials to spread their views, limiting their message to a local audience (Schafer, 2002). But, in more recent years extremist groups like the Ku Klux Klan have become more media savvy, instead conducting numerous public symbolic acts to attract attention. Now many extremist groups, including the KKK, Neo-Nazis, and skinhead groups, are active on the Internet (Blazak, 2001; Brown, 2009; Lee & Leets, 2002; Williamson & Pierson, 2003; Xu et al., 2006; Zhou, Reid, Qin, Chen, & Lai, 2005).

The Internet has become a vital tool for extremist groups to reach a global audience, connect different groups and ideologies, convince extremists they are not alone in their beliefs, spread material, recruit, discuss strategies and tactics, sell hate products, encourage violence, and establish solidarity within a leaderless movement (Brown, 2009; Douglas, McGarty, Bliuc, & Lala, 2005; Gertenfeld, Grant, & Chiang, 2003; Glaser et al., 2002; Lee & Leets, 2002; Schafer, 2002; Xu et al., 2006; Zhou et al., 2005).

Hate Groups

"Hate groups" can be difficult to define operationally and there is the tendency to lump all hate groups together, but each has their own doctrines and ideologies, and design messages to recruit and indoctrinate individuals to their group beliefs. According to the SPLC, "All hate groups have beliefs or practices that attack or malign an entire class of people, typically for their immutable characteristics" (Southern Poverty Law Center, n.d.). The SPLC continues, "Hate group activities can include criminal acts, marches, rallies, speeches, meetings, leafleting or publishing," as well as publishing material on Web sites, so long as the site does not appear "to be merely the work of a single individual" (Southern Poverty Law Center, n.d.). In the United States there is the propensity to view "hate groups" as solely those made up of racist whites, but the SPLC also considers Black Separatists, the Jewish Defense League, Radical Traditionalist Catholic groups, and Latino separatist groups as hate groups as well. This study however focused on white hate groups which have a longer and more violent history than non-white hate groups and because they are the most common form of cyberhate on the Internet (Douglas et al., 2005).

For example, White Nationalist groups "espouse white supremacy or white separatism," while Neo-Confederate groups "seek to revive many of the racist principles of the antebellum South" (Southern Poverty Law Center, 2008, p. 52). According to Duffy, the National Alliance and the KKK imagine a "new white world" where the natural order of white supremacy will be restored (2003, p. 298). The National Alliance, a Neo-Nazis organization, believes that "Nature and evolution combined to challenge the Aryan race to a higher level of development," and that the creation of a greater white world and a great white society "urges a new and greater level of development, celebrating only white culture"

(Duffy, 2003, p. 300 & 301). In Blazak's (2001) study of skinheads, he found that racist skinheads believe that a race war in America is inevitable, and that skinheads' ultimate goal is a United States ethnically cleansed of all enemies and white race traitors.

Unlike in the past however, these groups are no longer mass social movements that receive tacit approval by some and general acceptance by others. For example, after the release of the film *Birth of a Nation* in 1915, the Ku Klux Klan expanded beyond the southern United States into "a national organization of three to six million members during the 1920s, making it one of the largest social movements in U.S. history" (Richard, 2009, p. 287). Extremist groups today have moved away from being large social movements, and instead encourage a leaderless resistance advocating small autonomous cells, or individuals, to target government officials, civil right activists, and minorities for violence (Levin, 2002). These guerilla groups of small cells have diverged from mainstream society and are no longer enforcers of majority status, but instead act as a form of armed resistance against society and the government (Levin, 2002).

As extremist movements become splintered into individual cells however, they lose their hierarchical authority and become more difficult to police. In addition to losing their organizational structure, Gertenfeld et al. (2003) argue that distinctions between extremist groups based on geographic or religious barriers have also become blurry because of the Internet. The Internet allows extremist groups to share information and members, and offer links to other hate group Web sites (Gertenfeld et al., 2003), thus bringing together groups and members that would not otherwise associate with one another. The combining of extremist ideology between White Power groups that once competed with one another, but

which now share goals and members, is the most clearly observed on racist music sites that sell extremist merchandise across the different groups.

Internet of Hate

Anonymity and increased user-activity make the Internet an integral recruiting tool for any movement and especially for extremist organizations (Williamson & Pierson, 2003). The Internet was designed to be decentralized where control would be distributed to all users allowing everyone the opportunity to contribute to the content of the Web (Chaffee & Metzger, 2001, p. 369). This decentralized structure however allowed a multitude of sites to be formed, each with its own content and cause, and provided extremist groups a forum to expound on their ideologies, and empower others with similar beliefs (Chaffee & Metzger, 2001). This self-actualization allows individuals to connect with others around the world who share their beliefs in a way previously unavailable (Chaffee & Metzger, 2001). In addition, the Internet's interactivity, anonymity and perceived credibility are a powerful tool of persuasion for extremist groups (Duffy, 2003).

The Internet offers a fast, easy, inexpensive, and potentially high-quality means of communicating with members and potential members where information can be distributed across the globe and jurisdictional boundaries (Gertenfeld et al., 2003; Levin, 2002; & Schafer, 2002). These messages and Web sites are more accessible than the groups themselves, and allow anyone with a computer and Internet access to interact with extremist group members around the world. Hate and extremist groups historically have been at the forefront of Internet technology and electronic communication (Duffy, 2003). In 1985, Tom Metzger created a computer bulletin board for the White Aryan Resistance, and in April,

1995, former Klansmen Don Black set up the neo-Nazi Web site Stormfront.org, which is considered the first domestic extremist group Web site in the United States (Duffy, 2003; Gertenfeld et al., 2003; Levin, 2002; Schafer, 2002; & Zhou et al., 2005).

Douglas et al. (2005) argue that the cyberhate on the Internet by white supremacists opposes blacks, Jews, immigrants, and presents whites "as victims of conspiracies organized by Jews, often involving using African-Americans" (Douglas et al., 2005, p. 74). These sites also often teach the white supremacist philosophy "that the United States is manipulated by foreign Jewish interests collectively known as the Zionist Occupation Government (ZOG)" (Blazak, 2001, p. 989). Brown observed that white supremacist sites will also often frame blacks with "blatantly racist and offensive stereotypical overgeneralizations" (2009, p. 189). Brown continued that the sites attempt to "affirm that Black people exhibit unlawful behavior that threatens civilizations and White survival," by arguing that black people are "inherently dangerous and prone to criminal behavior" (2009, p. 199). Skinhead sites expound on these ideas of white supremacy and an inevitable race war in the United States ending with an all-white homeland (Blazak, 2001; & Whitsel, 2001). To accomplish this goal, skinheads believe America needs to be ethnically cleansed of all minorities and whites that do not believe in white superiority, and that violence and terrorist attacks are essential to start the coming race war (Blazak, 2001).

Extremist groups attempt to expose individuals to these messages to reinforce the beliefs of current members as well as recruit new members and especially younger members. In a study, Gertenfeld et al., found that 7% of hate sites had kids' pages that contained "messages from other children, games, music, and 'history' lessons" (2003, p. 35). In another study, Lee and Leets (2002) discovered that many hate Web sites have specialized children's

pages, and argued that hate groups were focusing their recruiting on school-aged children, and young white, male teenagers. Blazak (2001) explains that young people often look to join groups as a way of defining themselves and therefore can be particularly susceptible to hate groups. The identities that young people assume once they join a group can become all encompassing which makes them valuable to extremist movements looking for dedicated members (Blazak, 2001). Stopping extremist groups from recruiting young people though is difficult as these groups argue for their right to spread their message under the guise of Freedom of Speech.

Legality

Extremist and hate Web sites use the First Amendment and legal precedent to spread their message. Many hate sites include disclaimers "based loosely on the prevailing legal proscriptions (established by Brandenburg v. Ohio), that they are not attempting to engender violence," and instead are "merely providing people a forum to access the information that they 'want and need'" (Williamson & Pierson, 2003, p. 254). But, with the anonymity afforded to Internet users both as site visitors and site creators, it is difficult to determine culpability of a message posted on these sites and how that message might influence others to act (Williamson & Pierson, 2003).

Overt hostility and advocacy of violence however is not acceptable on the Internet and considered dangerous by the courts, and legal action can be taken against Web administrators that allow it to occur on their site (Douglas et al., 2005). Courts in the United States have convicted individuals using the Internet to advocate violence or communicate threats (Douglas et al., 2005), and criminal prosecution has forced some hate groups to

dissolve or splinter after lawsuits and imprisonment of top group leaders (Levin, 2002). In

addition, civil courts have placed large monetary judgments against a number of hate groups

for their actions, which have bankrupted various Klan and neo-Nazi groups (Levin, 2002).

Without leaders and formal organizations, because of civil and criminal prosecution,

the extremist movement has adapted into a leaderless resistance where anonymous

individuals produce Web sites to attract anonymous viewers who can be indoctrinated with

the messages found on these sites. Along with hate messages these Web sites often include

violent and racist video games targeted toward young people.

Video Game Violence

While video games can be for entertainment or educational purposes, violent video

games are predicated on the need to cause physical harm or death to another character in the

game to earn points or to win the game (Ferguson, 2009, p. 352). Repeated exposure to such

violent video games can become desensitizing for the players in their perceptions and views

of violence (Anderson & Dill, 2000).

However, while exposure to violent video games may cause individuals to become

desensitized to violence, according to Ferguson (2009), the results from studies on video

games causing violence and aggression have been mixed. According to Ferguson (2009), not

all studies on video game effects use violence as an outcome as it would be unethical to

provoke subjects to commit violent acts. Instead, researchers measure aggressive behaviors

which "are presumed to involve intent to do harm to another" (Ferguson, 2009, p. 352).

However, as Bushman, Rothstein, and Anderson (2010) continue, while researchers

of media violence do not claim that violent forms of media are the most important factor to

explain aggressive and violent behavior, but of all the factors that can cause violent behavior, exposure to violent images are the easiest to control. For young people, additional factors include child abuse and neglect, and parental rejection, criminality and alcoholism (Bensley & Van Eenwyk, 2001, p. 244). Ferguson (2009) adds that in general however, for individuals already predisposed to aggression, violent video games may increase aggressive behaviors. According to arousal theory, "if the video game player has an aggressive disposition, or is angered, playing an arousing video game might cause increased aggression" (Bensley & Van Eenwyk, 2001, p. 245). In essence, while violent video games alone do not cause violence, research has shown they are a significant factor in causing aggression and at times violent outbursts.

At the same time, Anderson and Dill (2000) argue that children and adults learn appropriate behavior from television, movies, and video games. When individuals play violent video games they are rehearsing "aggressive scripts that teach and reinforce vigilance for enemies… aggressive action against others, expectations that others behave aggressively, positive attitudes toward use of violence, and beliefs that violent solutions are effective and appropriate" (Anderson & Dill, 2000, p. 774). Bensley and Van Eenwyk contend that according to cognitive "priming" theory and the social information-processing model, violent video games may "activate related cognitive structures, making it more likely that other incoming information would be processed in an 'aggression' framework" (2001, p. 245). Bensley and Van Eenwyk continue that "someone for whom thoughts of aggression have been evoked might be more likely to interpret an ambiguous behavior as aggressive and respond accordingly" (2001, p. 245).

Warner and Raiter (2005) maintain that the virtual world of video games provides distance between players and their actions in the game and that this distance can diminish the player's sense of responsibility for their actions within the game itself. Warner and Raiter add that when players inflict harm within the video game world, this could "promote their inflicting harm in reality" (2005, p. 49).

Some researchers have argued exposure to violent video games contributes to aggressive personalities and increases aggressive thoughts and behaviors while decreasing empathic feelings, leading to an increase in delinquent aggressive and nonaggressive behaviors (Anderson & Dill, 2000, Bushman et al., 2010). Researchers have found that this is especially true for "first person" video games where the player assumes the identity of the characters and controls their actions though the characters' own eyes (Anderson & Dill, 2000).

Anderson and Dill (2000) continue that violent video games also "provide a forum for learning and practicing solutions to conflict situations" where playing violent games can prime aggressive thoughts as the player learns and practices "aggression-related scripts that become more and more accessible for use when real-life conflicts arise" (p. 788). This concept comes from social learning theory, which suggests that aggression can be learned from observing and then imitating, "a model who acts aggressively," as "Aggressive video game characters might serve as models for aggressive behavior" (Bensley & Van Eenwyk, 2001, p. 244).

While playing violent video games may be only a factor in causing actual violence, Anderson and Bushman conclude "exposure to violent video games… is positively

associated with heightened levels of aggression" and "negatively associated with prosocial behavior" (2001, p. 358).

To further investigate video games on hate and extremist Web sites and how they promote violence and negative racial stereotypes, the following research questions were proposed:

RQ1: What groups or individuals are portrayed as the enemy in video games found on hate and extremist Web sites?

RQ2: What groups or individuals are portrayed as the hero in video games found on hate and extremist Web sites?

RQ3: Were the video games on hate and extremist Web sites found in children's sections on the sites or were they intended for a general audience?

RQ4: Were the video games found on hate and extremist Web sites graphically sophisticated?

RQ5: Was the apparent purpose of video games on hate and extremist Web sites to advocate violence and/or conflict towards an ethnic, religious or racial minority, or to promote positive attitudes towards an extremist agenda?

METHODS

In 2002, the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) released a report commenting on the rise of racist video games on the Internet, "being created primarily for a teenage audience" (Anti-Defamation League, 2002). The report included the names and partial descriptions of eight games on three Web sites (Anti-Defamation League, 2002). The Web sites included the National Alliance's white supremacist music label Resistance Records, the homepage for the World Church of the Creator, and a site by Gary Lauck who the ADL describe as neo-Nazi

and Holocaust denier (Anti-Defamation League, 2002). The eight games in the report included "SA Man," "Aryan 3," "Shoot the Blacks," "NS DOOM" (National Socialist), "WP DOOM" (White Power), "Ethnic Cleansing," a modified version of "Escape from Castle Wolfenstein," and a "game where the player is challenged to shoot 'Jewish' rats" (Anti-Defamation League, 2002). The current study moved beyond the three sites discussed in the ADL report to expand the sample of games found on white supremacist Web sites.

The Internet is boundless and constantly changing and expanding, therefore a comprehensive analysis of video games on every hate Web site is impossible as new sites emerge constantly and older sites get shut down or cease being updated. Extremist Web sites can appear and disappear overnight, content and hyperlinks can change, or the sites may be shut down by ISPs or by hackers (Gertenfeld et al., 2003; Schafer, 2002; Xu et al., 2006; & Zhou et al., 2005). According to Schafer, "the greatest challenge to successful internet-based research is determining an appropriate population from which to draw a representative sample," as it is difficult "to determine the true size of any population of web sites" (2002, p. 72). Schafer continues that "research using web sites as the unit of analysis must often rely on less accurate purposive sampling techniques" (2002, p. 72).

The study by Schafer (2002) which included a list of 132 hate and extremist sites was used to locate the most prominent hate Web sites on the Internet. Schafer used a "purposive sample of web sites catalogued online with HateWatch" to generate the data for his study (2002, p. 73). In addition, 643 sites provided by the Southern Poverty Law Center's report on "The Year in Hate" were also included to increase the overall sample size for this study (Southern Poverty Law Center, 2008). The Southern Poverty Law Center builds their list of active hate groups and their Web sites "based on information gathered by the Intelligence

Project from hate group publications, citizen reports, law enforcement agencies, field sources and news reports" (2008, p. 52). But, as this study focused on white hate and extremist groups, the 33 Black Separatist sites, 15 Radical Traditional Catholic sites, pro-Jewish sites like the Jewish Defense League, and Latino separatist sites like Voz de Aztlan were not examined from the Southern Poverty Law Center's list, for a total of 592 sites. It should be noted that by the time of this study, HateWatch which had been used in the study by Schafer (2002), had become a part of the SPLC's Intelligence Project.

Schafer argues that using a purposive sample developed by a "watchdog" group like HateWatch or the SPLC "does raise certain methodological concerns" as these groups have "an established agenda and vested interests which they seek to protect" (2002, p. 73). However as Schafer continues, because groups like the SPLC and HateWatch have "clear and explicit guidelines for defining which types of web sites will be included in its catalogue," that any "methodological issues that attend the use of watchdog groups for sampling purposes are not points of concern" (2002, p. 73).

According to Goodwin, "it is difficult to understand how we might possibly gain a rich understanding of what attracts individuals to extremist movements by reducing … their motives to a selection of pre-determined choices" (2007, p. 5). Instead, qualitative inquiry is needed to understand the social worlds of extremists rather than relying solely on quantitative measures. The methodology used to conduct this study was qualitative in nature. The video games in this study were examined through interpretive textual analysis. Using this method, games were examined to understand if they promoted/advocated violence, or portrayed the beliefs of white supremacist groups in a positive way to players. Games were also analyzed

to determine who were depicted as enemies and heroes, where the games were located within the Web sites, and the visuals in the games.

In order to investigate video games found on hate and extremist sites, the researcher entered the URL for each hate and extremist site included in the articles by both Schafer (2002) and Southern Poverty Law Center (2008) to ascertain if the sites were still working. Next, the researcher went through all links on the site to determine if there were any video games offered. If games were found, the researcher noted the site, title of the game, if there was a particular hate group associated with the site or if it was a general hate site with no organization affiliation, and which link brought the researcher to the game to determine if the links were titled "Kid's Section" or anything related to young people. Finally, the researcher determined if the games could be played online, needed to be downloaded to the computer to be played, if additional software was required for the games to be played, or if the games had to be purchased.

Each game that did not require being purchased was played by the researcher until the game was won or until the point had been reached where it was not viable to continue playing as there was no conclusion to the game. After each game was played, the researcher noted the hero, or main character, in each game which was the character or object that the researcher could control in the game. The researcher also noted the enemy in the game which could be either the character the hero defeated or killed to earn points or the characters or objects depicted that had to be overcome in order for the game's hero to score points or move to the next level. The researcher also noted the graphics in the game in comparison to current game graphic technology or if the games used older or outdated graphic technology. Finally, the researcher determined if the games used violence for the character to score points and

move to the next level, or if inanimate objects with no real world equivalent were shown in the games in which case the belief was that this game, rather than showing violence, instead used symbols and objects relating to hate beliefs and messages in order to promote the group.

RESULTS

Video games on hate and extremist sites were examined and coded in the order they were found on the Web. In addition, using the same coding sheet and coding instructions (See Appendix A), a second coder, co-coded 25% of the games examined. Similar results were found by both the researcher and the second coder in all areas.

After an examination of the two samples of white supremacist sites from Schafer (2002), and the Southern Poverty Law Center (2008), a total of 28 video games were found and included in this analysis, more than tripling the number included in the ADL report (See Appendix B). Among the 28 games found, 21 could be played by the researcher. While some of the same games in the ADL report (Anti-Defamation League, 2002) were included in this study, the "World Church of the Creator" site no longer existed by the time this study was being conducted and although the organization has been renamed "The Creativity Movement," no games were found on the new site.

Previous research suggests hate and extremist Web sites quickly appear, disappear, and change URLs (Gertenfeld et al., 2003; Schafer, 2002; Xu et al., 2006; & Zhou et al., 2005). Among the list of 132 hate and extremist Web sites from 2000 included in Schafer's (2002) study, 83 were no longer active, eight were for groups in other countries, one was anti-religious, two were Black Separatist, three were pro-Christianity sites, two were pro-Jewish, and one was a site for a folk/country singer. Therefore only 32 of the 49 active sites

were examined. In total, 17 games were found from the list of 32 sites from Schafer's (2002)

study; 15 came from the White Aryan Resistance Web site, and two from the racist music

Web site Resistance Records. The remaining eleven games were found on thirteen additional

hate and extremist sites using the list of 592 provided by the Southern Poverty Law Center

(2008). The thirteen sites included a racist joke site, the California Skinheads site, the

National Socialist German Workers Party site, the World Union of National Socialists site,

the racist skinhead group Blood and Honour site, five different racist music Web sites, a

Neo-Nazi merchandise site, a White Nationalist extremist merchandise site, and the racist

music site unholyrecords.com led directly to the Resistance Records Web site where two

games had been found. No video games however were found on any Ku Klux Klan, Neo-

Confederate, Anti-Gay, Anti-Immigrant, or Holocaust Denial Web sites, although Klan

characters appeared in some of the games as heroes. Interestingly, among the 24 racist music

sites from the Southern Poverty Law Center (2008), ten were no longer working, while seven

of the remaining fourteen sold hate video games.

RQ One – Enemies in games on hate sites

In the 28 games examined, Blacks and Jews were the most often portrayed as the

enemy. Other minorities were also depicted as enemies including one online game on the

racist jokes and WAR site called "Border Patrol" in which the player used a gun scope to

shoot Mexicans as they cross the United States and Mexico border. Before the game begins

the player was informed, "There is one simple objective to this game, keep them out… at any

cost." The player shoots three types of Mexicans as they moved across the screen: the

"Mexican Nationalist," the "Drug Smuggler," and the "Breeder." The "Mexican Nationalist"

was shown wearing a bandolier and carrying a Mexican flag, the "Drug Smuggler" was overweight wearing a sombrero, and the "Breeder" character was an overweight woman pulling children behind her. The goal was to shoot as many Mexicans as possible before they enter the United States.

In the downloadable game "Aryan 3, Adventures of the Aryan Hero, The Third Quest," on the Blood and Honour site, the objective of the game was to "destroy all the 'Spicnig' eggs," with the insinuation that blacks and Hispanics don't breed like humans and instead lay eggs. An additional game titled "White Law," which can be purchased on the Resistance Records Web site and through Unholy Records, requires the hero to combat "the all minority 'Equality Police.'"

In the online game "Watch out behind you hunter!" on the WAR site, the player was a white safari hunter and moved through a simple two-dimensional maze with a double-barreled shotgun with the objective to shoot and kill any naked homosexuals that jumped out from the bushes before they grab the hunter and sexually violated him. The White Aryan Resistance (WAR) described the game as "Shoot the fags before they rape you!"

In the game "Kill 'em All!" on the WAR site, the purpose of the game was to shoot photos of famous minorities and communists moving across the screen in either direction. The background of the game was a Nazi rally with Nazi soldiers in black and white. The enemies in the photos included Vladimir Lenin, Joseph Stalin, Che Guevara, Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X, and Ariel Sharon. This was the only time white Communist leaders appeared as enemies in any of the games, although it was unclear if Che Guevara was included because he was a communist, Hispanic, or both.

Muslims, Muslim terrorists, and Osama bin Laden were depicted as enemies in four of the games including the first player shoot 'em "Bin Laden Liquors" on the WAR and racist jokes sites. The object of the game was to shoot Osama bin Laden when he popped up from behind a counter in a liquor store while not shooting hostages who were half-naked white men with gags in their mouths. The game ends when the player failed to shoot 10 Osamas. In the incorrectly spelled German-language game on the WAR site called "KZ Manager Millenium: Hamburg Edition," the player is a "Manager of a concentration camp," and the object of the game was to buy, gas, hunt, and force Muslim Turks to work in labor camps. The entire game however was in German and the simple actions in the game had to all be roughly translated from German to English before the game could be played.

The online game "Celebrity Terrorist Alert" on the racist jokes site was another first player shoot'em in which the player viewed a generic countryside through binoculars and shoots terrorists with a red gun scope. The "terrorists" in this game included Osama bin Laden, Saddam Hussein, Ariel Sharon, Tony Blair, and George W. Bush. In addition, pictures of Brittany Spears and Adolph Hitler appeared floating on angel wings, but the player lost points for shooting them.

In the online game "Kaboom! The suicide bombing game" on the WAR and racist jokes sites, the enemies were presumably Jewish men, women and children, and the hero was a suicide bomber. The poor and simplistic graphics of the game made it difficult to tell who the hero or enemies were, but the game included an opening picture of Yasser Arafat, which led to the conclusion that the suicide bomber was Palestinian and the enemies were Jewish people walking down a city street. Points were awarded in the game for the number of men, women and children killed or wounded, but it was difficult to tell which were killed and

which were wounded. It can be speculated that as long as they were only killing Jewish people, even Arab terrorists can be heroes in White Supremacist video games. This finding is significant as it alludes to an overriding belief among some extremist groups that Jewish people anywhere are the enemy (Douglas et al., 2005).

RQ Two – Heroes in games on hate sites

Among the 21 games played, seven were first player shoot'em games, making it difficult to tell the hero character. But, in three of the seven first player shoot'em games, the player is able to see a white hand holding the weapon used in the game. In "Wolfenstein – Nazi Version," the hero had been changed from a Jewish concentration prisoner to a Nazi soldier shooting blacks and Jews. This was a modified version of the original 1990s game which was the original "first person" 3-D shooter game (Anti-Defamation League, 2002). Changing the graphics and music is a game is not uncommon on hate sites or for other purposes. According to the ADL, "hate groups have invented new game levels and characters by taking advantage of a built-in feature of some commercially sold games that enables them to be modified – creating 'mods' in the industry parlance – of the original games" (Anti-Defamation League, 2002).

In the downloadable Nazi version of "Wolfenstein" the player wore a Swastika armband, Nazi soldiers were replaced by black men with afros and a bone in their hair and when killed the bloody bodies read "Dead Nigger," and the machine gun Nazis were replaced and given "JDL" helmets for Jewish Defense League. The maze walls were also changed to read "gas chamber" with arrows, pictures of Adolf Hitler, a caricature of an Indian that said "Curry," a caricature of a black male that said "Yo Dead White Boy," a caricature of a

Mexican in a sombrero that said "Tequila." Some walls also had white power symbols and slogans on them, and photos of various people including one that said "Traitor Elisse Hategan Romanian Jew Mud." The WAR site also offered three other mod games including "WP DOOM Patch," "NiggaZDOOM," and "National Socialist DOOM." The WAR site described "NiggaZDOOM," with the following: "Ever wish you could go to the local hood and blast away some crazy niggaz? Well now you can, thanks to NiggaZDoom!" Only "Wolfenstein Nazi Version" however could be played without downloading additional software, while the other three games required the player to already own the DOOM game to modify it. As these three games required purchase or illegal download of the original game to modify and then be played, they were not examined, but still included in this study.

In the remaining games where a hero could be seen, the heroes included an Aryan Knight, Nazi soldiers, white males, a skinhead Mario from Super Mario Bros in two of the games, a Nazi flag, a white safari hunter, a suicide bomber, a black gangster and Eddie Murphy.

In "Drive-by 2" the hero was a black gangster. In the game the black gangster hangs out of the passenger window of a low-rider car on rims. The object of the game was to shoot people in windows, cats, mailboxes, white prostitutes, black males on bikes, black males sitting on porch stoops, and a police car. The game ends when a police car runs the gangsters' car off the road. The game was described on the racist jokes site as "Drive around the 'hood and shoot some niggas!" Similar to the game "Kaboom!" a non-white person was portrayed as the hero for killing blacks and white prostitutes working in the ghetto. The character being black in a game on a hate site is significant, because as Leonard explains, white extremists "praise games for elucidating the savagery of people of color" (2006, p. 87),

and by making the hero character in "Drive-by 2" a black gangster, the game reinforces the stereotype that black men are violent.

In the game "African Detroit Cop" on the WAR and racist jokes sites, the hero was a cartoon Eddie Murphy in a letterman jacket similar to the outfit in the movie *Beverly Hills Cop,* but with a photo of his face from the movie *Coming to America* complete with gold chains. In the game Eddie reacts to situations either by talking it out, using force, or dancing. Eddie talks to or dances for white and black characters, but only shoots black characters. The final enemies in the game were Arsenio Hall, who stars in *Coming to America* with Murphy, and Judge Reinhold, who stars with Murphy in *Beverly Hills Cop*. In the game, Hall and Reinhold robbed a bank and Eddie must defeat their robot after they escape. When Eddie lost the game he was shown in the police captain's office eventually urinating on the floor. When Eddie won the game he was shown on the cover of *Time* magazine as the Man of the Year. The purpose of this game appears to be to assert white racial superiority as it includes a white male as one of the two criminal masterminds while also portraying black men as violent, prone to dance, and animalistic by urinating in an office setting.

None of the games however were found on kid's pages on the various hate and extremist sites. Instead, the games were listed under Games or Arcade on the sites and on the racist music and racist merchandise sites were given their own page or listed under miscellaneous.

RQ Three - General Audience or Kid's Games on hate sites

Although none of the games examined were in children's sections, many of the hate sites did have children's sections or forums that had young adult or teen chat sections. Of the

28 games, seven could be played online, nine had to be downloaded in .zip format and saved to the computer, four had to be downloaded and required additional shareware software to open them in MS-DOS, three were mods that required the player to already own the original version, one was a downloadable demo version of the game "ZOG's Nightmare," "Ethnic Cleansing" and "White law" could be purchased on the Resistance Records and Unholy Records Web sites, full versions of "ZOG's Nightmare" and "ZOG's Nightmare II" could be purchased on the Neo-Nazi merchandise site nsm88records.com and the White Nationalist merchandise site ns88.com, as well as four racist music Web sites: micetrap.net, whitepride.net, whitepride.com, and whitepride.com/rahowa, and the original "ZOG's Nightmare" could be purchased on the Final Stand Records Web site at finalstandrecords.com. The sites micetrap.net, whitepride.net, whitepride.com, and whitepride.com/rahowa all led to the Micetrap Distribution LLC Racist Music Web site where visitors could purchase a number of extremist merchandise. The Micetrap Distribution Web site describes "ZOG's Nightmare II: The War Continues" as "a brilliantly created video game and propaganda tool. This first-person shooter in the style of Wolfenstein and Doom combines blood-frenzied battles with minorities and WP music, National Socialist Movement videos, speeches and advertisements."

A demo version of the game "ZOG's Nightmare" could be downloaded from the World Union of National Socialists Web site. "ZOG's Nightmare" was a DOOM style game, in which the hero was a member of the American Nazi Party with various weapons to kill black men. The black men were identified not only by the color of their skin but also because some had the letters "NIG" on their forehead. The game takes place in a maze and the walls had Nazi and Adolf Hitler pictures as well as modern Nazi Party photos. The demo version

only included one level but it was the most graphically sophisticated game played. In addition, White Power skinhead music played in the background.

Although none of the games were found on Kid's Pages or children's sections of these sites, it could be argued that many games instead would have most likely appealed to an older audience who played the original versions of some of the games in the early 1980s and 1990s. The WAR site offered modified and downloadable versions of the "Original Mario Brothers" game as well as "Super Mario Brothers 2." Both games maintained the same basic premise and set-up as the originals but with modified graphics. In the WAR version of the "Original Mario Brothers," Mario was a skinhead, when he powered-up he appeared in a white Klan outfit, and when he had fireball powers he was in a red Klan outfit. On the player select screen, players could select "1 Nigger H8R," or "2 Nigger H8RS." Additional alterations to the game included power ups changed from mushrooms to White Klan robes, Question Blocks were Swastikas, and the mushroom enemies were replaced with dark black babies in diapers. The rest of the game including the music and background graphics were the same as the original.

In the downloadable altered version of "Super Mario Brothers 2," Mario, Luigi, and Toad were skinheads, Mario was in a red Klan outfit when he powered-up, Luigi and Toad were in white Klan outfits when they powered-up, but the white Princess remained the same. Similar to the "Original Mario Brothers," the game remained the same but with modified graphics as enemy mushrooms were black and when hero characters pulled up plants from the ground to use as weapons they were black babies in diapers. Power-ups were small Klan outfits, and swastikas frequently appeared in the game.

The original versions of "Mario Brothers" and "Super Mario Brothers 2" were released in the 1980s. Another game that came out at that time was Duckhunt. The WAR Web site also offered a downloadable graphically updated version of Duckhunt under the name "Nazi Moorhuhnjagd." The opening screen to game had the audio "Adolph Hitler. Seig Heil. Seig Heil. Seig Heil," and depicted a Nazi flag and a picture of the ducks the player shoots in the game with X's for eyes and a yellow Star of David over its chest. In the game there was a sign post with a Nazi symbol on top and arrows pointing to Dachau, Auschwitz, and Buchenwald. The game showed a rolling countryside with a castle in the background. In addition, there was a scarecrow with a pumpkin for a head and a top hat with a yellow Star of David, hot air balloons went by with giant Nazi flags on them, and there were two trees with anti-Jewish propaganda signs and photos of men in blue and black with a red Star of David over them; the sign was in German. The object of the game was to shoot ducks wearing yarmulkes. When the game was over the screen was broken into four parts: on the top left was a photo of a Nazi soldier with a machine gun, in the left middle was a Nazi flag, and at the bottom left was a picture of the world with a photo of Hitler superimposed over it. On the right side of the screen was a Nazi propaganda photo that showed an Aryan warrior goddess standing over a Nazi giving another Nazi a medal. The words in the poster read, "Fight and you may Die. But your honor will live forever."

RQ Four – Graphics of games on hate sites

Overall, the graphics in "Nazi Moorhuhnjagd" and "ZOG's Nightmare" were comparable to today's video games, while the graphics in the rest of the games played were

either graphically poor online flash games, outdated, or variations of games from the 1980s
and 1990s with modified graphics.

"Aryan 3" on the Blood and Honour site, was the most basic game of the 21 played.
The main character moved in a two-dimensional, tic-tac-toe 3x3 checkerboard and character
actions were based on hitting various keys for the character to attack or retreat. The
downloadable "KZ Rattenjagd" on the WAR site was a graphically poor first player
shoot'em game in which the player killed two-dimensional rats that moved haphazardly
around the screen. The rats were intended to represent Jews in a concentration camp, and in
the background of the game were three cans of Zyklon B with skulls and bones on them. The
opening screen to the game showed a giant Nazi flag, and all the words were in German.
Before the game began a screen appeared that depicted a rat with a Star of David on it and
introduced the game in German and ended with "Heil Hitler." The player had 60 seconds to
shoot the rats, and at the end of the game a score was given with a Nazi flag in the
background. The game "KZ Manager Millenium" shows a building with a Nazi flag on it and
a large smokestack in a barren wasteland. The entire game takes place in a pop-up window
over the background and requires the player to click buttons in German to kill Turkish people
or force them to work in the labor camp.

On a Web site for the California Skinheads was another graphically poor game called
"Shoot the Blacks." The site described the game as "Levels and levels of first person fun.
Niggers shoot back while trying to hold their pants up and little monkeys hang from trees."
The game was in Swedish, and the opening screen had two Swedish flags and instructions in
Swedish, but players were notified of reaching a new level in English. In the first person
shoot'em game, the player shoots one of three characters: black males with FILA hats and

shirts dressed in bright colors like gangsters, black infants in diapers with exaggerated lips and who ask for bananas, and a black sun in the corner of the screen. The backgrounds were rundown buildings, and black infants and gangster characters appeared from off screen, behind trees, in doors and windows, or on top of buildings. Although graphically poor, the game was still bloody, and when a black infant or gangster was shot, a puddle of blood was left behind until the next level was achieved. Similar to "Drive-by 2," this game reinforces the white extremist stereotype that black men are gangsters at best with the additional discourse that blacks are also little more than infantilized children (Leonard, 2006).

The game "Nigger Hunt" on the Blood and Honour site required players to download additional software to play the game in MS-DOS. The graphics were only marginally better than some of the other games. The site described the game as "safari in Africa - kill all the niggers you can." In the game, the player was a hunter standing in the back of a green pick-up truck holding a shotgun. Five huts surround the hunter in a semi-circle pattern, while Africans appeared in the doors to the huts for the hunter to shoot leaving a bloody pool.

The majority of the games examined depicted brutal violence against blacks, Jews, and other minorities. Few of the games engaged in self-promotion and instead graphic violence toward minorities appeared to be the only objective in most of the games.

RQ Five - Violence or Self-Promotion of games on hate sites

The majority of the games examined came from the WAR Web site and included a warning at the top of the page that the games were not intended for children or the promotion of violence toward others. But, the majority of the games examined depicted graphic violence toward blacks, Jews, and minorities, with the only conceivable purpose being to

encourage violence or at least make violence appear an appropriate reaction to the given situations. Among the games played, 19 promoted violence and/or conflict toward blacks, Jews, and minorities, the seven included but not played assuredly depicted violence toward minorities, while only two appeared to be intended for self-promotion as they did not depict violence but instead required the player to use hate symbols to score points to move to the next level rather than requiring violence to advance. The distinction was made that if it was not required that the hero character cause physical harm or death to an enemy character because the enemy character was an inanimate object (Ferguson, 2009), the game was intended for self-promotion through the use of hate symbols as heroes. The games coded as self-promotional however still emphasized white extremist stereotypes of black males and Jews.

One of the games coded as self-promotional was downloaded from the National Socialist German Workers Party site called "SA-Mann;" the game was also found on the racist jokes site. The game began with a background of the universe with an image of the Earth coming toward the player with a spinning swastika in it. The game was an altered version of Pac-Man but instead of the Pac-Man character it was the face of a Nazi soldier looking off in the distance. Instead of eating pellets, the Nazi Pac-Man left behind a trail of Nazi flags. The game board was larger, but instead of normal walls, they were 3D buildings that represented a Jewish Ghetto. The power-ups in the corners were swirling swastikas, and the "ghosts" from the original Pac-Man game were replaced with colored squares with Jewish caricatures with frightened faces after the Nazi Pac-Man eats a power-up.

The game "Ghetto Blaster" on the WAR site was also coded as a self-promotional game and was a modified version of another classic video game. The game was modeled

after "Breakout" in which the player moves a paddle across the screen to hit a ball and break apart bricks. In the altered Nazi version, the background of the game was a color photo of Nazi soldiers marching and carrying swastika banners. Inside the playing area of the game were various pro-Nazi posters from the 1930s and 1940s. The ball was a 3D Nazi flag, and the blocks the ball hit were various colors with black and white pictures to symbolize blacks and Jews. Blacks were shown as cartoon monkeys or caricatures with exaggerated lips, dark skin and pronounced features. Jews were depicted as the Star of David, bags of money, or caricatures with big noses and scruffy facial hair. When a black piece was hit it made one of two Ape noises, and Jewish pieces made an "Oye" noise. When some pieces were hit with the 3D Nazi flag ball, a colored power-up swastika dropped from the block and audio of a "Seig Heil" chant from a Nazi rally sounded.

Almost all of the games examined promoted violence/conflict toward minorities. One of the more violent games played was downloaded in MS-DOS form from the Blood and Honour site. The first player shoot'em game "Prison Guard" took aspects of the Holocaust and implemented them into the game. The Blood and Honour site described the game as "Shoot the escaping prisoners with different weapons." In the game, Jews in concentration camp clothing ran across the screen while the player shot them before they escaped. In addition, a bulldozer moved across the screen and ran over any Jews trying to make it across. Players shot the head or legs of the escaping Jews, but if only the legs were shot, the Jewish caricatures crawled across the screen to freedom. A player's score was based on how many prisoners escaped, were left immobile or dead, or shot headless. The hideous irony of such a game is that although many extremist groups include Holocaust deniers, games like "Prison Guard" and "KZ Rattenjagd" use the Holocaust as a background for the game. The presumed

purpose of such games is to present the white extremist belief that Jews are subhuman (Blazak, 2001), and must be killed or exterminated like rats in "KZ Rattenjagd" or in concentration camps like in "Prison Guard."

DISCUSSION

Most people never attend Klan rallies or meet skinheads, but these groups have a strong presence online where individuals can read their messages, learn about their propaganda, and participate in extremist rhetoric, anonymously from their home. Previous research has shown that hate and extremist Web sites have short existences on the Internet (Gertenfeld et al., 2003; Schafer, 2002; Xu et al., 2006; & Zhou et al., 2005). Only 49 of the 132 sites in Schafer's 2002 study remained active by late 2008, and of the 49, many were shells with broken links and had not been updated in years. In addition, many Web sites listed in the Southern Poverty Law Center's Spring 2008 *Intelligence Report* from 2007, also were no longer active by early 2010. No games were found on the Southern Poverty Law Center's list of 64 Ku Klux Klan Web sites, nor any other Klan Web site, although some of the games found did have Klan characters. Instead, among the 28 games examined, 22 were found on Neo-Nazi and Skinhead sites, two were found on the Resistance Records and Unholy Records sites, two were found on two different extremist merchandise sites and four different racist music sites with one on an additional racist music site, and while two were only found on a racist jokes site, the site also included "Bin Ladden Liquors," "African Detroit Cop," "KA BOOM!," "Border Patrol," and "SA-Mann." In addition, although Gertenfeld et al., (2003) found that 7% of hate Web sites had kid's pages, some of which contained video games, no video games were found on kid's pages in this study.

Many of the games in the sample were first person shoot'ems where the player only sees a gun scope making it impossible to determine the game's hero. But, it is presumed that the hero was a white male who could only succeed in the game by killing or destroying blacks, Jews, and other minorities. Even in the game "Ghetto Blaster," an inanimate object like a Nazi flag was a hero when it defeated black and Jewish blocks. Overall, Jews and blacks were the most often depicted as enemies in the games. Blacks were frequently portrayed as apes or monkeys ("Mario KKK" and "Mario KKK2"), or as violent gangsters and street thugs ("Drive-by 2" and "Shoot the Blacks"). Jews were depicted as rats in "KZ Rattenjagd," and as a lower form of life in Nazi Duckhunt. The significance of these depictions according to Thibodeau, is the insensitivity in "racial or ethnic put-downs… often serves to solidify in-group ties and harden attitudes toward out-group members" (1989, p. 482).

Jews may have been frequently targeted as enemies because the games overwhelmingly originated on Nazi and skinhead Web sites. But, all minorities appeared as enemies in the games examined. In addition to blacks and Jews, homosexuals were brutally murdered for points in one ("Watch Out Behind You Hunter"), Mexicans were gunned down while music played in the background in another ("Border Patrol"), Muslim terrorists were killed in other games ("Bin Laden Liquors"), and Muslim Turks were exterminated in "KZ Manager Millenium." Even communists, enemies of Socialist Nazis, were targeted in "Kill 'em All!"

A majority of the games promoted violence and conflict, often with excessive violence toward blacks and Jews, as enemies were killed for points leaving behind graphic corpses or pools of blood. The few games that were relatively non-violent, such as "Ghetto

Blaster" and "SA-MANN," were alterations of classic games, but opened and closed with Nazi propaganda and required the player to use Nazi symbols to defeat Jewish and black enemies.

Results suggest the games were used as a form of entertainment to reinforce and educate players of a racial hierarchy where heterosexual white Christians are depicted as superior to all other races, ethnicities, religions, and sexual preferences (Blazak, 2001; Brown, 2009; & Duffy, 2003). The message taken from these games is that the only way to deal with blacks, Jews, Hispanics, Muslims, and homosexuals is violence. This idea is supported by Blazak who argues that skinheads believe individual acts of terror and violence will polarize the country by race and speed up the coming race war where whites can either kill off all others or establish a place for themselves in a white only country (2001). Known as the "Northwest Imperative, white separatists plan to carve out a homeland in the Pacific Northwest within the borders of Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming" (Arena & Arrigo, 2005, p. 492). This idea is clearly evident from the Resistance Records description of "Ethnic Cleansing": "The Race War has begun. Your skin is your uniform in this battle for the survival of your kind. The White Race depends on you to secure its existence. Your peoples (sic) enemies surround you in a sea of decay and filth that they have brought to your once clean and White nation. Not one of their numbers shall be spared........"

Limitations & Future Research

In this study, only games that could be played online or downloaded and played on the computer without needing to already own the unmodified game were examined. Many of these were online flash games and the overall simplicity and poor graphics in the games may

prevent them from having any significant impact on an individual's beliefs on minorities or extremist ideology. However, other games were also found on sites that were available for purchase and could then be mailed to an individual's home. For example, "ZOG's Nightmare," was examined in this study, but was a demo version of the game that could be purchased online. The original "ZOG's Nightmare" and "ZOG's Nightmare 2," an updated version of the original, presumably with more realistic and violent graphics, were available for purchase on seven sites. But, to play these games, site visitors would have to provide contact and credit card information which prevents anonymity and may prevent a new or casual site visitor from wanting to be seen as paying members to an extremist group.

In addition, a number of sites had private and closed forums where individuals were required to sign up to view and post messages. The possibility exists that these closed forums may have contained additional games. Many of these forums had kids' sections in which games potentially could have been available. However, as this would have required providing personal information, and the games could not be downloaded anonymously, the researcher did not sign up for any chat rooms and no games were examined that required providing personal or identifiable information. Future research would benefit from examining closed forums in which individuals are required to register with the site to participate in discussions and download material. These forums may contain additional and more recent games that take advantage of advances in computer and gaming technology.

Also, to determine the impact of video games found on hate and extremist sites as well as the effectiveness of the propaganda messages within them, members of hate and extremist groups need to be studied to examine what motivates them to make such games,

include them on their Web sites, and/or play them, and how playing them influences their actions and beliefs.

A total of 724 Web sites were examined in this study for racist video games. Only 15 of the sites examined had video games on them, and nine had games for purchase. However, many of the sites offered videos, music, clothing, leaflets, posters, and books for purchase. Future research should examine these additional forms of white supremacist propaganda to examine how they are used to promote white supremacist ideology.

CONCLUSION

While only 28 games were found on the 724 sites examined, more games may have existed in closed forums that were unavailable to the researcher. Most of the games examined were graphically crude compared to today's video game technology. But, games like "ZOG's Nightmare," are comparable to the graphics available in most video games today. However, games like "ZOG's Nightmare," "Ethnic Cleansing," and "White Law" cost money to make and distribute and therefore might not be the most cost effective means to recruit and indoctrinate new members into extremist ideology. Free mp3s and YouTube videos of extremist propaganda are cheap to produce and easy to distribute on the Internet, and many of the sites examined used these other forms of media to spread their message. In essence, video games may not be a primary tool for extremist groups to recruit and indoctrinate. As they were included on so few sites, it would appear many extremist groups have decided instead to use other means to spread their message. The implication for these games most frequently being found on music and merchandise sites is that the games are marketed more to current members of extremist groups as a means to reinforce white supremacist ideology

rather than simply as a means to recruit new members. However, that many of these games were available on skinhead and Neo-Nazi sites suggests that these groups may possibly be more upfront with their racist views than other extremist groups, and may also explain why these groups are considered the most violent of the White Power and extremist movement.

While there may have been a small number of games found, this does not mean they should be ignored; they are but one more weapon in the extremists' arsenal. The sheer fact that they were included on so many merchandise and music sites suggests that they are seen as another form of purchasable extremist propaganda. Although it is unclear how well these games sell or who buys them, that they were on half of the racist music sites from the Southern Poverty Law Center's racist music category (2008) where extremists can go to purchase merchandise and on two extremist merchandise sites, indicates they are being used as a means to spread white extremist ideology.

The reality is, the number of domestic hate and extremist groups are expanding, and they are having an ever growing presence on the Internet (Southern Poverty Law Center, 2008, 2009b). As the June, 2009 shooting at the Holocaust Memorial Museum and the 2009 Brockton, Massachusetts shootings (Southern Poverty Law Center, 2009a) demonstrate, some extremists are taking the message from these sites and games to the next level – violence.

For hate and extremist groups to grow in membership, they must expand their recruiting efforts among adults and young people. This study however found insufficient evidence to suggest that hate groups are specifically targeting young people though video games. No games were found on kid's pages, and most were graphically outdated by today's standards and instead were updates of games from the 1980s and 1990s. Creating hate and

extremist games to compete with today's video game technology is time consuming and costly, and offering the games free online may not be effective in recruiting.

However, as explained by Abraham H. Foxman, the ADL National Director, while the games are advertised as entertainment on extremist sites, their intended purpose continues to be to spread the "message of white supremacy, anti-Semitism and hate to a mass audience" (Anti-Defamation League, 2002). The results to this study agree and suggest the messages in the games, however crude, were that non-whites are the enemy and the only solution to the "problem" is violence.

Video games can become a virtual immersion into a world where violence is not only acceptable but required for an individual to advance (Williamson & Pierson, 2005). After repeated playing of violent video games that contain racist stereotypes, the message that violence is an acceptable means of dealing with minorities and homosexuals can become indoctrinated into the player who may already be prone to such thoughts or have aggressive dispositions (Bensley & Van Eenwyk, 2001; & Duffy, 2003). The repeated exposure to these messages and the violence and racism in the games can lead to desensitizing where the player rehearses aggressive scripts in the games that they may play out later in real life, and may develop positive attitudes toward the use of violence (Anderson & Dill, 2000; & Bensley & Van Eenwyk, 2001). In essence, the harm players cause in the games may translate to actual harm they cause in the real world (Bensley & Van Eenwyk, 2001; & Warner & Raiter, 2005).

As technology continues to advance, including computer, graphic, and video game technology, hate groups may continue to use video games to recruit and spread their ideologies. Ironically, one of the Internet's great technological advances has been to allow individuals to exchange ideas anonymously, regardless of how distasteful some may see

them. What is clear is that although Web sites may change, URLs may disappear, and groups

may change names and tactics, hate and extremism remains and has a home on the Internet.

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APPENDIX A

Hate Video Games

Item #_____

Date Accessed:

Website:

Hate/Extremist group:

Name of Game:

Enemy in the game:

Hero in the game:

Where the game was located:

Advocacy:

Violence Conflict Self-promotion

Game complexity:

Simple Medium Difficult

Coding Guidelines

1. Indicate the date the Web site was accessed and video game was found.

2. Web site. Provide the main Web site where the game was accessed and the URL for the game.

3. Hate Group. Identify the hate group that sponsors the site and video game.

4. Name. Identify the name of the video game.

5. Enemy. Identify the enemy chosen in the game, either by race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or religion.

6. Hero. Identify the game hero; if a first person game, indicate if hero character is given a persona.

7. Location. Indicate if the game was found in a separate section of the website, in a children's section, multi-media section, or if it needed to be downloaded.

8. Advocacy. Indicate the advocated position of the game in relation to an advocacy of violence or struggle, or if the game represented a self-promotion of the hate/extremist group's ideals and symbols.

9. Complexity. Identify the quality of the game by visual representation. Was the game comparable to today's graphic technology, or was it a modification of an older game or graphically simplistic game but with added racist themes.

APPENDIX B

Item # 1
Hate/Extremist group: White Aryan Resistance (WAR) & General Hate (Racist Jokes)
Name of Game: Bin Laden Liquors
Web site: http://www.resist.com/
Web site: http://racist-jokes.com/index.php?cat=arcade&page=arcade

Item # 2
Hate/Extremist group: White Aryan Resistance (WAR) & General Hate (Racist Jokes)
Name of Game: African Detroit Cop
Web site: http://www.resist.com/
Web site: http://racist-jokes.com/index.php?cat=arcade&page=arcade

Item # 3
Hate/Extremist group: White Aryan Resistance (WAR)
Name of Game: Watch out behind you hunter!
Web site: http://www.resist.com/

Item # 4
Hate/Extremist group: White Aryan Resistance (WAR) & General Hate (Racist Jokes)
Name of Game: Border Patrol
Web site: http://www.resist.com/
Web site: http://racist-jokes.com/index.php?cat=arcade&page=arcade

Item # 5
Hate/Extremist group: White Aryan Resistance (WAR) & General Hate (Racist Jokes)
Name of Game: Kaboom! The suicide bombing game
Web site: http://www.resist.com/
Web site: http://racist-jokes.com/index.php?cat=arcade&page=arcade

Item # 6
Hate/Extremist group: White Aryan Resistance (WAR)
Name of Game: Ghetto Blaster
Web site: http://www.resist.com/

Item # 7
Hate/Extremist group: White Aryan Resistance (WAR)
Name of Game: KZ Rattenjagd
Web site: http://www.resist.com/

Item # 8
Hate/Extremist group: White Aryan Resistance (WAR)
Name of Game: Kill 'em All!
Web site: http://www.resist.com/

Item # 9
Hate/Extremist group: White Aryan Resistance (WAR)
Name of Game: Nazi Moorhuhnjagd
Web site: http://www.resist.com/

Item # 10
Hate/Extremist group: White Aryan Resistance (WAR)
Name of Game: Mario KKK1
Web site: http://www.resist.com/

Item # 11
Hate/Extremist group: White Aryan Resistance (WAR)
Name of Game: Mario KKK2
Web site: http://www.resist.com/

Item # 12
Hate/Extremist group: White Aryan Resistance (WAR)
Name of Game: KZ Manager Millenium
Web site: http://www.resist.com/

Item # 13
Hate/Extremist group: White Aryan Resistance (WAR)
Name of Game: WP DOOM Patch
Web site: http://www.resist.com/

Item # 14
Hate/Extremist group: White Aryan Resistance (WAR)
Name of Game: NiggaZDOOM
Web site: http://www.resist.com/

Item # 15
Hate/Extremist group: White Aryan Resistance (WAR)
Name of Game: National Socialist DOOM patch
Web site: http://www.resist.com/

Item # 16
Hate/Extremist group: General Hate (Racist Jokes)
Name of Game: Celebrity Terrorist Alert
Web site: http://racist-jokes.com/index.php?cat=arcade&page=arcade

Item # 17
Hate/Extremist group: General Hate (Racist Jokes)
Name of Game: Drive-by 2
Web site: http://racist-jokes.com/index.php?cat=arcade&page=arcade

Item # 18
Hate/Extremist group: California Skinhead
Name of Game: Shoot the Blacks
Web site: http://www.caskinhead.com/games.htm

Item # 19
Hate/Extremist group: National Socialist German Workers Party & General Hate (Racist Jokes)
Name of Game: SA-Mann
Web site: http://www.nazi-lauck-nsdapao.com/
Web site: http://racist-jokes.com/index.php?cat=arcade&page=arcade

Item # 20
Hate/Extremist group: World Union of National Socialists
Name of Game: ZOG's Nightmare (Demo)
Web site: http://nationalsocialist.net/index.htm

Item # 21
Hate/Extremist group: Blood and Honour - Skinhead
Name of Game: Wolfenstein – Nazi Version
Web site: http://www.bhbulgaria.com/other/games/games/main.htm

Item # 22
Hate/Extremist group: Blood and Honour – Skinhead
Name of Game: Nigger Hunt
Web site: http://www.bhbulgaria.com/other/games/games/main.htm

Item # 23
Hate/Extremist group: Blood and Honour - Skinhead
Name of Game: Prison Guard
Web site: http://www.bhbulgaria.com/other/games/games/main.htm

Item # 24
Hate/Extremist group: Blood and Honour - Skinhead
Name of Game: Aryan 3. Adventures of the Aryan Hero The Third Quest Seig Heil!
Web site: http://www.bhbulgaria.com/other/games/games/main.htm

Item # 25
Hate/Extremist group: NS88 Videos, Final Stand Records, NSM88 Records, Micetrap Distribution LLC (Racist Music)
Name of Game: ZOG's Nightmare I
Web site:
http://www.ns88.com/shop/index.php?infoBox=3&cPath=182&osCsid=3c6089f9f53fe2a6fa822146a34c77b5

http://www.finalstandrecords.com/FSRstore/index.php?main_page=product_info&cPath=39&products_id=531&zenid=71cb6fdfb48dde58fc8623ebf3924129
http://nsm88records.com/theshop/index.php?cPath=51
http://www.micetrap.net/shop/catalog/index.php/cPath/33?osCsid=c30e32d228884e3cdf1441eb8173fe12
http://www.micetrap.net/shop/catalog/index.php/cPath/33

Item # 26
Hate/Extremist group: NS88 Videos, NSM88 Records, Micetrap Distribution LLC (Racist Music)
Name of Game: ZOG's Nightmare II
Web site:
http://www.ns88.com/shop/index.php?infoBox=3&cPath=182&osCsid=3c6089f9f53fe2a6fa822146a34c77b5
http://nsm88records.com/theshop/index.php?cPath=51
http://www.micetrap.net/shop/catalog/index.php/cPath/33?osCsid=c30e32d228884e3cdf1441eb8173fe12
http://www.micetrap.net/shop/catalog/index.php/cPath/33

Item # 27
Hate/Extremist group: Resistance Records & Unholy Records (Racist Music)
Name of Game: Ethnic Cleansing
Web site:
http://resistance.com/catalog/index.php?cPath=28&osCsid=518cf3520d48cb9839760236e7ec5478
http://resistance.com/catalog/index.php?cPath=28&osCsid=a0bd3815aa5dd797191010d365338a09

Item # 28
Hate/Extremist group: Resistance Records & Unholy Records (Racist Music)
Name of Game: White Law
Web site:
http://resistance.com/catalog/index.php?cPath=28&osCsid=518cf3520d48cb9839760236e7ec5478
http://resistance.com/catalog/index.php?cPath=28&osCsid=a0bd3815aa5dd797191010d365338a09