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Gaming Discourse Community

In 2019, League of Legends Worlds finals had over 44 million viewers watching. That's more than double the viewers the 2019 NBA finals had, with around 20 million. Gaming is a huge industry that is often overlooked from the outside. People think of it as something only children do and generally as a waste of time. Both of these are wrong because gaming is used as both a hobby for people and if lucky enough even well paying jobs for people. According to Dot Esports, "League's highest earner just so happens to be the best player in the world—Faker. Faker is the only player to earn more than \$1 million," and according to Business Insider, "At the peak of 'Fortnite's' popularity, Ninja was reportedly earning as much as \$500,000 a month from streaming and sponsorships." This goes to show how gaming isn't a joke and can be used to make a career for yourself, whether it be through professional leagues or streaming.

While I myself am not close to being good enough to make gaming a feasible career for myself, I still enjoy gaming as a hobby. I mainly play League of Legends, a real time strategy game, and it's a great way for me to unwind after a long day of work or college. That's a great thing about this discourse community. Not everyone has to have the same goal while enjoying the same thing. Some people can game with a competitive drive, in a professional environment,

trying to win tournaments while getting paid, while some people can game to improve at the game as a personal goal, and then there's people who game just to have fun with their friends. I would definitely fall under the last two. When I'm playing by myself, my goal is to improve at the game and rank up just because it helps me feel good when I get better. While I'm playing with friends, I'm just having a blast with them. It's a great way to enjoy the free time I have at home, playing video games in peace.

When it comes to communicating with the outside world, professional gamers can always show off their gaming skills and their earnings are usually public so it acts as a way of telling the outside world that gaming is not a joke. As for casual gamers like myself, we can always express our gaming interests with other people. We can introduce non-gamers to the gaming experiences we enjoy, as all discourse communities are different and it's interesting to have a look into one you're not apart of. We can share our experiences with this community while non-gamers can share their experiences. In the same sense, gamers can communicate with other gamers by sharing games they like. There are millions of different games and we can use that to introduce other gamers to games which they haven't played. When it comes to a specific game, like League of Legends, other LoL players use thread pages and messaging applications such as reddit and discord to communicate to the larger side of the community. This includes letting other players know about issues they're having with the game, their achievements, and new updates and content coming soon. It's a great way for current players to learn more about the game they enjoy.

When actually playing the game, everyone is relaxed and communicates in a very easy going language. There's no need to try to talk in a professional matter because everyone is there

to just have fun. Slang is used, gaming terms are used, and everyone just enjoys themselves playing the game. For League of Legends, gaming terms can be common ones such as buffing, nerfing (to make stronger/to make weaker), one shot (deleting an enemy in a very short time), and broken (overtuned). While playing, we can either communicate through voice chat using a microphone, or regular chat, typing up our messages to each other. When playing with friends, I like to use voice chat as it helps me communicate with my friends more, making it more enjoyable. When playing League of Legends by myself, I tend to use regular chat to communicate as LoL does not offer voice chat with random people. Other games such as Fortnite, Overwatch, and Call of Duty let you communicate with random players on your team through voice chat. Even if you don't know them, it's still really enjoyable as you both still have the same common goal, win the game. It's fun talking to new people as well so it's really great in every aspect.

The greatest thing about the gaming discourse community is that you don't need to know anything at all to join this discourse community. You don't need to be good at the game to enjoy it, as long as you find it enjoyable and meet other people in the discourse community. As with all discourse communities, there's always a toxic group apart of it. Ignoring that, the gaming discourse is very inviting to new people looking to get into gaming. There's tons of people who are glad to help you learn the game, improve at the game, or even just play the game with you to make the experience as enjoyable as possible. The only common goal you need to have with people already inside the gaming discourse community is that you want to have fun. Everything after that just comes with experience.

At the end of it, the gaming discourse community is a very inviting and enjoyable group. You can have the goal of trying to become a professional gamer trying to make a living off of it, you can have the goal of trying to improve for your own satisfaction, or you can have the goal of to unwind and have a great time playing with friends or even random people. You don't need to be necessarily good at the game you're playing to enjoy it. If you're ever struggling to learn the game or to find people to play it with, you can always go on a thread page or a discord group dedicated to that game for tips to get better and to find people to play with. It's a very diverse community with all sorts of different games and all sorts of different people playing them. Gaming is not a joke and is not only for children. This discourse community is pretty large and something that everyone should at least look into before dismissing it. It's a great hobby for a lot of people and it can be a great new hobby for people who aren't familiar with gaming yet.

Resources:

Marta Juras. "Here are the top 5 League players in terms of prize money earned",

Dot Esports, 16 Oct. 2019,

<https://dotesports.com/league-of-legends/news/league-of-legends-top-earners-17360>

Kevin Webb. "Ninja ditching Twitch for Microsoft's Mixer was a brilliant decision",

Business Insider, 4 Aug. 2019,

<https://www.businessinsider.com/ninja-leaving-twitch-brilliant-move-2019-8>