

# Gaming as a Path to Sexual Assault: A Content Analysis of Fan Comments in Response to a Virtual Reality Sexual Assault Discussion

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Trends in technology include the use of virtual reality (VR) and providing side gaming options. Scholars of popular culture have drawn attention to gender troupes and the sexualized nature of video game content. The current study extends that research by analyzing a random sample of 50 viewer responses to a gaming commentary group known as Funhaus' podcast discussing opposing perspectives on a 2016 video game that involves heavy sexualization of anime women and allows for a VR "sub-game" where players are given the option to sexually assault said anime girls. The content analysis explores where podcast viewers fell on the debate of whether the game option was viewed as good because sexual predators can turn to VR to meet their desires or if the game contributes to a larger rape culture. Results indicated that many viewers responded positively to the discussion while negative responses included attacking or defensive behavior.