

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Identification and the Influence of Cultural Stereotyping on Postvideogame Play Hostility

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The current study examines the impact of racial representation on character identification and postgame play hostility. Examining data from Black and White participants, results suggest that cueing racial attributes influences identification and elicits stereotyping and hostile outcomes. Specifically, White players displayed more hostile thoughts when playing as a Black character than they did playing as a White character. Black participants had more hostile thoughts when playing against a White opponent than they did playing against a Black opponent. This research supports previous literature suggesting that self, character, and opponent interact to influence game-play outcomes.

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Researchers have established a positive relationship between videogame play and hostility (Anderson, 2004; Anderson & Bushman, 2001). Recently, researchers (Eastin, 2006, 2007; Eastin & Griffiths, 2006) have begun to further this inquiry by uncovering the complex nature of game play in the context of self, character, and opponent. Findings suggest trait and cultural-based norms influence how players are affected by game play and these factors also influence aggression-related outcomes. Although informative, Eastin's research agenda has thus far only examined game type, competition, gender, and technological differences. Thus, building from the literature on videogame play and in-group identification, the current research extends the gaming literature by examining race-based attributes of self, character, and opponent.

This study examines White and Black videogame players. Through research on stereotyping and competition, this study examines how playing as a Black or White character, against a Black or White opponent, influences character identification and hostility within Black and White players. Simply, this study will examine how identification and hostility are enacted through the same game-play mechanisms.

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