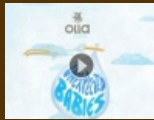


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Girl Talk: I'm A Gamer

Tamara Lynch 10 HOURS AGO

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GAMING FOR LOVE



Here are 7 ways video games may be good for your relationship.

DUNGEONS DATE



A writer is sure she will find love at Dungeons & Dragons.

SOAPBOX



Thoughts on the OK Cupid/Magic the Gathering controversy.

Last Sunday morning, I zip-lined through a South American jungle, shot and killed several enemies, grabbed a fully loaded rocket launcher, and blew up a jeep filled with incoming hostiles. Once clear, I crept to an enemy occupied mansion that held the lost treasure I planned to steal. I climbed undetected up the side of the structure, pulled out my silencer, dispatched more enemies, grabbed the treasure, and bounced!

Thirty minutes later, I had a champagne brunch with my girlfriends.

Hi. My name is Tamara. I'm 36 years old ... and I'm a gamer.

Being a gamer my age comes with a stigma. When I tell my friends that I bought a new video game, they balk. "Aren't you too old for that?" I'm seen as immature or geeky, which apparently doesn't fit my fashion executive persona. What they don't understand is that gaming is no longer just for the dorky kid with no friends who masturbates to the well-endowed female characters. It's a pastime similar to watching T.V. or a movie, but you have control of the action. For instance, let's say you really enjoyed the T.V. series "Game of Thrones" earlier this year. Imagine someone saying to you, "Hey, would like to be a character in 'Game of Thrones'?"

"Yes, I would!"

"Well, here is your controller. Choose your character, and your weapon!"

I already know who I want to be when the PS3 adaptation comes out in 2012.

And did I mention that most of the games rated "Mature" have sexual content? I repeat, there is sex. *Heavy Rain* had nudity and a full sex scene. Who's mad at that?

One of my co-worker's told me not to tell guys I like video games. "It makes you sound like a loser," she said. This same girl puts pink bows in her dog's hair and arranges her schedule around Basketball Wives L.A. She

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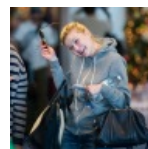
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Ad Agencies Rebrand Girls



In the Clouds With Dior Couture



has never played a game, nor is she aware that girls are beginning to dominate the gaming community, and rightly so. These games take smarts, strategy, and multi-tasking ability. We girls are naturals at this stuff, and guys think that's hot!

Case in point: a few years ago, *Time Out New York* had a "Date Our Friends" section where the editors created dating profiles for their single friends. I was absently flipping through the magazine when I stumbled across the picture of an attractive guy, who wrote that he was hoping his date would be up for a PlayStation face-off.

The subject line of my email to him read "You had me at PlayStation face-off." I admit that it wasn't his looks, his good job, or his witty profile that made me want to reach out. It was the PlayStation. *Time Out* guy wrote me back a day later. We exchanged a few emails about our favorite games, but it turned out that he was looking for a Jewish girl. We never met, which was fine, because relationships can cut into gaming time.

My gaming started in grade school with an Atari: *Pitfall*, *Frogger*, *Mario Bros.*, and of course *Donkey Kong*. I played in the morning before school, after school, in between band practices (I was the drum captain), cheerleading practices (also captain), and softball (M.V.P.). I wasn't lonely or a recluse; I just liked to play. And then it was *Mortal Kombat* my senior year in high school. On weekends, I took trips to the hoogie shop two blocks away where the brand new arcade game stood proud and inviting. I spent hours as Princess Kitana, slaying all the male characters using the "kiss of death," a move that delivered the coveted "Fatality!"

Fast forward to my twenties, when my boyfriend and I moved into our new apartment and he pulled out a dusty game console that I had never seen.

"What's this?" I asked. I had fallen off of the game circuit in college, unaware that gaming had become a whole new experience.

"It's a PlayStation 2. Wanna' play *Madden*?"

"Sure..." I didn't know what *Madden* was, but when he fired up the game, I was in awe of the 3D like characters and the advanced graphics. The controller buttons were weird — long gone was the joystick — but I quickly got the hang of it.

Playing *Madden* with my boyfriend was fun, but I never loved sports games. Searching for an adventure game, I came across good reviews for something called *Grand Theft Auto*. On a whim I bought *Grand Theft Auto: Vice City*.

And my gaming life changed forever.

I didn't just play Tony, the drug lord of *Vice City*, I was Tony, blowing up cars, soliciting hookers, killing those who crossed me and taking their money. Each completed mission took me to another level of crime. I stole expensive cars, bought hot clothes, flipped on the best '80s rock station, and drove along the techno-colored, ocean-view coast. I loved this game so much I wanted my guy to play it too, but it was a single player game. I picked up *Lord of the Rings*, a multi-player game we could play together, but he preferred watching football. We played together a bit in the beginning, but I finished it alone.

My boyfriend and I didn't last, but my love for gaming stayed strong.

Now in my 30s, there are times that I wonder if I am getting too old to game. I'm usually standing in line at GameStop with kids and their parents. Cashiers get red-faced when I explain that "Yes, I can see the rating. This game is for me, I don't have kids." And the last time I played Wii boxing, I was sore!

In the interest of "growing up," I only bought two games this year, the most recent being the fourth installment of the *Assassin's Creed* series. I had already played the previous three. After purchasing, I went to *Whole Foods* for lunch, where a group of children on a class trip were also eating. Laying my GameStop bag on the table, I began to eat when a boy, no older than 10, appeared at my table and put his finger on the bag.

"Oooh, what'd you get?" His face was alight with wonder.

"*Assassin's Creed Revelations*," I boasted.

"Oh yeah," he nodded, closing his eyes and nodding in appreciation. "Good one." Then he went back to his juice box.

I felt like I had been touched by the Dalai Lama. That two second conversation wiped out my concerns about my image, my age, and my gender. I love to play video games, and that's the bottom line. That kid and I shared an unspoken knowledge that all gamers share — that gaming is awesome. And I like to think I'm awesome for gaming.

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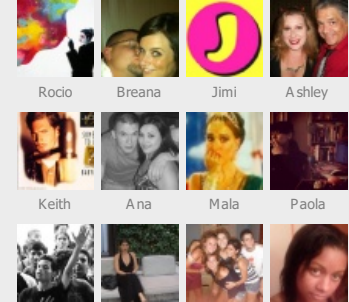
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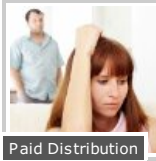
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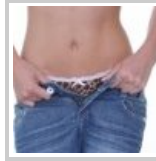
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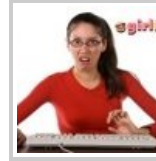
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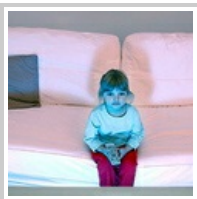
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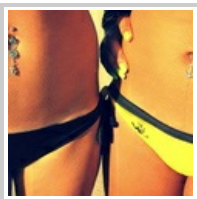
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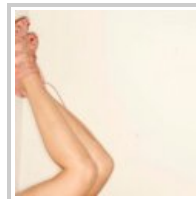
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TheFabulousMzM

I was engaged to a poet once. NEVER AGAIN.

[What Julie Is Wearing Today](#) · 0 minutes ago



thatkrazy

This kind of article bothers me. I don't think it's right to attack the woman cheated on, regardless of whether she stands by the accused or separates herself from him. Attack Herman Cain...

[Gloria Cain's Tips On How To Stand By Your Man Through A Political Sex Scandal](#) · 1 minute ago



TheFabulousMzM

Are these heels green, or camel colored? Regardless, I like.

[What Amelia Is Wearing Today](#) · 5 minutes ago



j.walker

Dough... like money. Because it is a business website. Julie, you are really embarrassing yourself lately.

[From The Department Of You Have Got To Be Kidding Me](#) · 17 minutes ago



IEatCrayons

I'll play!...But only if when I lose all of my money, the game board has a built in sound FX that says "Shieeeeeet!" (You won't understand that if you've never watched the show).

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Farah

I have always loved video games!
So much that my second date with my boyfriend of 3 years was hanging out and playing Left For Dead...I loved it. As a team we killed every zombie in sight! and saved each other from dying, too.
Surprisingly, I am the one who got him in Call of Duty =D (no, my bf doesn't ever choose to play video games over an actual date)

Great article! P.S. I got hooked on Vice City's 80s music, too!!!

1 hour ago

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



saboten

Interesting.

But wanted to comment that Heavy Rain does NOT have a full sex scene in it, just some options leading up to it and followed with a cut to Ethan and Madison.

3 hours ago

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



AnitaBath

I've never played Heavy Rain, but I think it just kind of ruins games when they have actual sex scenes in them. Or maybe I just think that way because the only game that I've seen an actual sex scene in is Dragon Age, and it was the CHEESIEST THING EVER. I like Fable's and Fallout's sex better, when they just fade to black and play comical noises.

"UUuuuggghhhhhhaaa. I want to be with you FOR-EVER!"

1 hour ago in reply to saboten

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



StephanieElizabeth

I think this is awesome. I WANT to enjoy video games, but I haven't found one I like. My boyfriend plays a lot, and I want to do it as well.

4 hours ago

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



Iss86

Jeez, I thought putting spaces around the periods in a website would let it go through the filter. Let's try this again.

As a fan of old school games, I recommend downloading a few emulators and trying out a bunch of roms until you figure out which types of games you like. That way you can try out a lot of different games on several systems for free. You won't be able to play any new games that way, but you can at least get a feel for the different types of games, and maybe you'll discover that, like me, you can't get enough of the old school games. The website I've been using lately for downloads is coolrom.

4 hours ago in reply to StephanieElizabeth

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



AnitaBath

Also, Gamestop gives you seven days to return a (pre-owned) game if you just didn't like it. They may not like you all too much if you go and buy ten games and then return all ten of them, but that would be a no pressure way to try out

certain games to see how you like them. If you hate it, no loss, just return it.

1 hour ago in reply to lss86

Like Reply



AnitaBath

What do you tend to like? Have you tried Fable? I feel like that would be a good one to start with, especially if you like the story and fighting aspect.

4 hours ago in reply to StephanieElizabeth 1 Like

Like Reply



Mari Deutsch

Fish. I'm a lifelong gamer, and it's only strengthened my relationship with my fiancée. Neither of us life MMOs or even multiplayer, but just the fact that neither of us is too upset when our gaming time is cut into by each other, or our each other time is cut into by gaming, there's just no such thing as being upset over gaming hours. And yeah, we're both psyched for Skyrim and KotOR.

6 hours ago 1 Like

Like Reply



baby.blanka

I have two comments regarding this article: I question the definition of "gamer" being used to describe the author. Either it means "plays the most popular titles in the past ten years because they are popular" rather than a more extreme definition which is normally understood when someone is being defined as a gamer.

Secondly, this article reads more like an intro to an article rather than the article in its entirety. So you've played games and associated better with one ten year old? Ok... where does that lead? How have games affected you in your life? How have you met people, or driven away people because of gaming? Are you thinking of going into competitive gaming or will this remain a hobby? What sort of women are dominating the scene? Professional scene?

I have often been described as a gamer and I feel like I could answer all of those questions with more descriptive articles on each topic versus one that sort of floats along the surface. Several months ago Burny ourbra (a professional SF player) wrote a great article on Shoryuken about being sort of looked down upon because she's an African American woman professional player. It also addresses issues of being a female gamer.

7 hours ago 1 Like

Like Reply



Holly

Nothing wrong with that. I held onto my Super Nintendo and N64 until they couldn't turn on any more.

7 hours ago

Like Reply



lss86

There are levels in Mario 64 that SCARE me. Like, I've never gotten all the stars in that game because I was too scared to play some of the levels enough to get all the stars. That's part of the reason I don't play newer games. The level of sophistication in the graphics is so high that I almost feel TOO connected to the game. I like the older graphics because it maintains a wall between reality and the game - I can enjoy playing without getting too invested.

6 hours ago in reply to Holly

Like Reply



Holly

He's right, you know. Assassin's Creed is a damn good choice. If it's at all feasible, I've found that the best solution for the kind of thing you mentioned about your then-boy friend is that both of you have your own consoles. I got super lucky in that my boyfriend and I have our own (both older ones, but hey!) and so when he wants to play Assassin's Creed, I load up Skyrim and we spend some hours getting into our own games. Sometimes we'll take a break and watch the other play - it's like a movie, after all. The ability to switch and move hard drives in the Xbox makes migrating from one house to the other to play that much better.

7 hours ago

Like Reply



AnitaBath

I actually just got a job at Gamestop! Two fifty something women came in the other day, and they were buying for themselves, not any kids. It was pretty awesome. And my manager is about your age, and I definitely hate it when it's seen as some sort of immaturity thing. I realize I'll probably be playing a lot less as I get older (and have a time-consuming job and a family), but I'm hoping it's always something I'll at least be able to dabble in.

And you REALLY need to try Skyrim.

8 hours ago 7 Likes

Like Reply



Sarahhow

I'll second the Skyrim recommendation. The past couple weeks of my life have been completely taken over by Skyrim. I've been a fan since Morrowind, so I was super pumped when it was announced.

2 hours ago in reply to AnitaBath

Like Reply



AnitaBath

I loved Morrowind way more than Oblivion! I was so excited for all the changes in Skyrim, it's really like they took the best from both games.

And I totally know what you mean about your life being taken over! I feel like I haven't slept in 3 weeks.

1 hour ago in reply to Sarahhow

Like Reply



Iss86

I'm so old school when it comes to gaming. I don't play any of the new games. I'm all about Super Nintendo RPGs, and some of the original PlayStation ones.

8 hours ago

Like Reply



DarthPipsqueak

Thank you so much for this article! I'm 20 and I've been playing video games since before I can remember. I got that old clunky gameboy when I was four years old and have never looked back. Sometimes my parents tell me I'm too old for that kind of stuff, guys don't like it, but I know that's not true. My current boyfriend was actually anti-video games, but after we got together he's become hooked on all the things I like. It's nice to have a companion that plays games with me! I say keep on gaming, girl. That stuff is fun!

8 hours ago

Like Reply



NakedDumblydore

Wow, how old is that stock photo that she's using a PS controller? :P

Lovely read. I'm always amused when my friends are surprised at how hard I kick their asses the first time we play Smash Bros.

9 hours ago 2 Likes

Like Reply

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