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ENDNOTES

i Demographic information was primarily collected from the group’s forum registration and in-world club pages, supplemented with observational and interview data.


iii For more in-depth studies of avatars and virtual worlds, see (Damer, B. 1997 Avatars! Exploring and Building Virtual Worlds on the Internet, Berkeley, California: Peachpit Press. and DiPaola, S. 1998-2005 ‘Steve DiPaola: A Body of Work (Web Site)’.

iv Much of the history of multimedia has been lost to history, in part because it has not been recorded in legitimate publications, and in part because many of the early publications that covered this material, such as short-lived multimedia trade magazines, have been lost. In the mid-1990’s, PC-makers began bundling software with consumer hardware. Myst, along with Compton’s Encyclopedia, were early CD’s that came free with such hardware. Many business analysts at that time, surprised by their failure to anticipate the boom in home PC sales, attributed the market success of the hardware to this practice of ‘bundling’. In some web forums, you can see passing references to receiving Myst free with ones first PC, etc. However, I was unable to locate any official publication that made note of this phenomenon.

v For more on the history of Myst, also see http://www.tiscali.co.uk/games/Myst/history1.html as well as the extensive fan-created Wikipedia entry on the game at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Myst.

vi For reasons of authenticity, all direct quotes from study participants are quoted verbatim from text chat or transcribed from speech. Quoted text will observe the spelling conventions of the speaker, including any grammatical or spelling errors produced.

vii Uru’s former community manager was interviewed several times with respect to this research.

viii This information was culled from interviews with Uru staff.

ix In some worlds, although rarely among TGUers, players can often have numerous different avatar characters within a single subscription account, each of which has a unique appearance and personality. When There.com had a special on free accounts, many players created ‘twin’ avatars, identical in appearance and with similar names to their main avatar. Through a special trick that allowed you to log into two different accounts off the same computer, players were able to run both avatars concurrently. Players could park their twin avatars in other locations, or even, in some cases, play two simultaneous games of Spades at the same event. Even for players who made entirely new (sometimes trans-gendered) avatars, it was generally clear that this was a secondary character, what role-playing gamers would call an ‘alt’.

x ‘Cosplay’, or costume play is a popular adult pastime in Japan. It’s manifestations run the gamut from dressing up as animé, manga and video game characters, to ‘The Matrix Offline’, a ‘smartmob’ (large-scale mobile phone instigated action) in which hundreds of Japanese men boarded Tokyo subways dressed as agents from the film, the Matrix. For more on Cosplay, see the work of Japanese media scholar Machiko Kusahara.

xi Summer camp in general seems to be an under-studied phenomenon. A cursory search on Google Scholar revealed only one scholarly publication on the topic of the sociology of summer camp, ‘Playing for privilege an ethnography of play in a summer camp’, a Canadian publication by Z.R. Cohen. I was unable to find any other reference to either this publication or its author. There were a number of other references to articles having to do with the health, educational and economic impacts of summer camp, especially on children with medical conditions such as cancer or asthma, or children with disabilities.

xii There has been some writing by games researchers concerning flow, and responses to these positions will be integrated into the third part of this thesis.