

Name
Date
class and period

Annotated Bibliography

Observations

Outside of Front Office, Salida High School. Salida, CO. Observation 1. 12 January 2012.

This set of field notes really helped me be able to better understand these high school students as a group of card game fanatics rather than them just being their regular selves. One pattern that I already noticed was that they all seem to have, as I said in the field notes, “extreme anger” towards one another.

I believe that this stems from their belief that no one but themselves knows how to play the game correctly so there are constant accusations of cheating. I have seen this from observing them in the past before the ethnography study. I found this to be very strange because I would think of this game as a way to escape from the anger but instead it seems to cause a lot of it.

There was one person I found to be the ring leader of this group however. This was Michael Ricci. He seems to start the games and bring all of these people together. This I have not just noticed today but from past experiences with him.

For the rest of this ethnography, I hope to find the root of their anger and why they play if they seem to get so frustrated.

Outside of Front Office, Salida High School. Salida, CO. Observation 2. 14 January, 2012.

This was the first time that I was able to observe my subgroup while they were not playing their game. This gave me a new perspective on this group and helped me to understand their group personality a little bit better. During my last observation, I discussed the fact that they accused Thomas of cheating while playing the game. When this happened, the group ganged up on Thomas and he got very defensive. When I was observing them today, you could tell that they were still upset with one another.

They separated themselves from one another rather than being one large group. They hung out with other people other than their group. This made me realize how much these individuals hold a grudge towards one another. They do not like to let things go very easily.

While this was going on, I also listened into a conversation with two players about their decks and how much money they have spent on their cards. The average amount spent on these cards is at least \$100, if not more. They also tend to sell their cards to have more money to buy new cards. This made me realize how much time and thought they put into this game and how they put a large chunk of their finances into this game that some say they won't even play after high school.

Outside of Front Office, Salida High School. Salida, CO. Observation 3. 5 March, 2012

During this observation, I observed my subgroup in a classroom setting. Well, one thing is clear to me after this set of field notes. They are very quiet in the classroom.

While in the classroom, my students that I was studying were almost nonexistent. This sounds very harsh but they barely made a sound to anyone. After the teacher was finished talking and we were able to work on our own work, they sat in their group and did their work very studiously. They rarely stopped to take a break or to talk to one another; they were very focused at the task at hand.

There was a change however, when we left the classroom and I watched them go down to their usual spot at lunch. They immediately shifted their mood and they started laughing and joking and having fun with their friends. So I think that I can safely call this subgroup shy and quiet in a classroom setting. I found it quite interesting that they could be so outgoing and excited when they play their game but as soon as they walk into a classroom they shut down and become studious robots. Somewhere they can have more fun than a high school. This game seems to act like an escape for them. This game let's them go somewhere better.

Outside of Front Office, Salida High School. Salida, CO. Observation 4. 14 April, 2017.

This is really when I started to notice that these people were creatures of habit. Every time they play this game they play at the same table at the same location outside of the front office of the school. I also noticed that every time they play the game, they always seem to get mad at one of the players. The player is different every time but there is a definite sense of hostility in this group.

Even though they never really have any proof of someone cheating or not there always seems to be someone new that is cheating. Whether it was meant for a joke or to be serious, someone is always accused of cheating whenever they play Magic. I don't really know why this happens but it is a very frequent occurrence.

Another pattern that I have noticed each time I have observed is that they are not afraid to drop and f-bomb or two. They seem to curse quite frequently while they play. They don't curse as much to one another when they are not playing the game.

One thing has started to change though. This subgroup has almost disbanded. Their games have become rare at the school. I was surprised that they actually played Magic today.

Outside of Front Office, Salida High School. Salida, CO. Observation 5. 17 March 2012.

This was another set of field notes from a classroom study. This study gave me a lot of the same. As I said in my last observation, these students are definitely creatures of habit. Once again, they are very quiet and kept to themselves for the most part. They stuck in their group of two or three and they don't go outside of that group. The one difference I saw today that I didn't see the last time I observed them in a classroom was that they were very distracted and preoccupied by computer games.

The reason I didn't notice this the last time was because they didn't have computers to play with the last time I observed them. This time however, they were able to play computer games all hour so they were not very studious and efficient as I once thought. They slightly changed my original perception of them.

By playing more games, they talked more to the people around them. Because others around them were also playing computer games, they had a common interest that they were able to discuss. They didn't chat up the room by any means, but they weren't nearly as shy as they were the last time I observed them in a classroom.

Outside of Front Office, Salida High School. Salida, CO. Observation 6. 18 March, 2012

Once again, I got a lot of the same information. I watched this subgroup play another game of Magic outside of the front office of the school. To be quite honest, I am getting a little bored of observing this group. The same thing seems to happen every time I watch them play a game of Magic.

First off, they all sit down at the same table with their lunches. Next, they all get out their decks and, after only a short while of playing; someone gets caught "cheating." All of the other members gang up on the poor accused member which is usually Thomas Buckingham if he is allowed to play that day. If he is not playing at that

time, there is always someone new to accuse. Then, once the accused leaves the game, the rest continue to play the game and constantly bring up why and how the other member cheated. They can never seem to let it go.

But, by the end of lunch, the one member who got called out for cheated usually returns and they all become friends again and things go back to the way they were. I wish that this group was just slightly more interesting to study.

Outside of Front Office, Salida High School. Salida, CO. Observation 7. 19 March 2012.

This is my final observation. I can't say that I am upset that this project is nearing a close. For the last time, I observed them playing a game of Magic. They sat at the same table once again, and played the same way that they usually do. One again, they got mad at each other over pointless nonsense and they started fighting. There was some cursing and there was some screaming between the members.

They seem to have lost their love for the game though. They have not been playing as much as they usually have in the school. They have said that they play on some weekends but the true dedication that they had when I first started to observe this subgroup has seemed to fizzle and fade away.

The members of this group still love the game and still enjoy playing the game but it seems like other obstacles have got in the way of their game time. Between school, work, and their other activities, they just don't have the time they used to play this game. They have to make take time out of their busy schedules in order to just have fun and play a game.

Interviews

Ricci, Michael. Personal Interview. 14 January 2012.

With this interview at the beginning of my ethnographic study, it helped me to really understand the who, what, when, where, and why. Ricci told me why he plays, how many members usually play at a time and a little bit of how to play the game.

This interview also let me into how these students really feel about the game. While some of them "may" keep playing Magic after their time in high school is over, Ricci said that his love for the game will probably "die down" and that it will most likely turn out like "Legos under the bed." What he meant by saying this is that he will still keep them, but he won't have a need to use them because he doesn't hang around people who play the game anymore and without anyone to play with you, you don't want to play with them because it's not fun.

It was really great to interview Michael Ricci for my first interview because the only person I interviewed that was able to give me specific answers to the questions I had and didn't get distracted by his surrounding like another member that I interviewed for this ethnography project.

Bullard, Mitchell. Personal Interview. 12 March 2012.

With this interview, I got a different perspective from a member of this subgroup. Mitch told me how much he spent on his specialized deck of cards. Let me just say, this amount he spent was RIDICULOUS! I don't even know how somebody could spend that much money on playing cards.

Another interesting part of this interview was the fact that Mitch said he was debating whether or not he was going to go professional with Magic. This was a shock for me because I had no idea that someone could go pro in this kind of a card game. But with this interview, I was able to get a good look into the mind of a player that really wants to continue playing after high school and possibly make it a career choice. This was completely opposite from my interview with Michael Ricci. While Ricci does not see himself pursuing this game after high school, Mitch has found a real love and passion for the game.

But besides that, they were very much the same. The both started playing for fun and because they enjoyed the competition that Magic brought. Both of them also liked the strategy that came along with the game. They appreciated the fact that you had to think about what card you had to play when in order to beat your opponent because one wrong move and you could lose.

Barrientos, Janet. Personal Interview. 26 March 2012

Janet's interview gave me a second view as an outsider. I say a second view because I also had an outsider view before observing this subgroup. By her telling me what her stereotypes were about this specific subgroup, I was able to relate my group to the stereotypes and decide whether or not they fit into those stereotypes or not.

Some of the stereotypes she said were just based on opinion. One example was the stereotype that they don't dress very well. Now I have no say whether or not they dress well but there are definitely certain stereotypes that Janet had stated that they do, and don't fit into.

I was happy that I was able to get an outsider's view on this subgroup because it helped me to get a better stand on what most people think about the group that I am studying. By knowing how other people view them, I definitely look forward to putting an end to some of the stereotypes that have been said about this group but also letting people know what is true. Mainly, I'm just excited to present all of the information that I was able to obtain on this fascinatingly boring subgroup. I say it this way because they do the same thing every day and that can become boring, but there are more layers to this group than I originally thought.

Secondary Research:

Lucking-Reiley, David. "Using Field Experiments to Test Equivalence Between Auction Formats: Magic on the Internet." *JSTOR*. American Economic Association. Web. 28 Apr. 2012.
<<http://www.jstor.org/discover/10.2307/117047?uid=3739256>>.

Going off of the preview I was able to see, this article discussed the trading and bargaining that the Magic cards have created on the internet. It also details the background information about Magic the Gathering. This information includes when the game started, approximately how many cards there are in the game as a whole, how many members there are playing this game, and more. The information this website has provided me will go a long way in figuring out some of the background knowledge needed to further examine my subgroup for this ethnographic study. This website is out of date as it was published in 1999, but some of the information that I was able to obtain from this source can still hold credible today. So even though this does not pertain exactly to my ethnographic study, some of the information given to me I will definitely be able to use in my final project, mainly the introduction. By putting this information into the introduction, I will be able to give my audience a better understanding of what Magic the Gathering is and how you play as well as the main goal or objective that the game offers its players.

Squire, Kurt. "Cultural Framing of Computer/Video Games." *Game Studies 0102: Cultural Framing of Computer/video Games*. By Kurt Squire. The International Journal of Computer Game Research. Web. 28 Apr. 2012. <<http://gamestudies.org/0102/squire/?ref=HadiZayifla>>.

What this website was able to give me was a large variety of sources about the effects, both good and bad, of gaming on education. Especially students that are still in high school. Even though they mainly focused on the computer gaming side, they also made references to old fashioned board games and card games that used to be much more popular than they are today. So even though the focus was not on the specific card game that I am studying, this study relates to gaming in general and the way I perceive Magic the Gathering is as a game that gamers play, which is exactly what the author of this article addresses. It also focuses on the education benefits of gaming and the effects that virtual learning has on this "videogame generation." So, this website will help me research the effects that this gaming could potentially have on their school work and what people with power have to say about the matter. By looking at this, I will then be able to relate it to the subgroup I am studying and I can compare and contrast them with the incredible amount of new information that this one article was able to give to me.