The Anti-Hero in the Videogame Medium

By Jack Livingston
The Anti-Hero

Anti-Hero/Flawed Protagonist:
- Qualities: selfish, rebellious, cynical, insecure.
- Has both good and bad qualities.
- Journey often serves to resolve internal conflict.

Traditional Protagonist:
- Qualities: Brave, strong, just, charming, smart.
- Generally admired by the viewer, but may be thought of as ‘too good to be true’.
Non-videogame Anti-Heroes

• Walter White – *Breaking Bad* (TV Series)
  o Flaws: Violent, greedy, inflated ego.

• Han Solo – *Star Wars* (Film)
  o Flaws: Rebellious, greedy, inconsiderate.

• Larry David – *Curb Your Enthusiasm* (TV Series)
  o Flaws: Nebbishy, inconsiderate, pedantic.

• Shrek – *Shrek* (Film)
  o Flaws: Insecure, lazy, tactless.
Anti-heroes in Videogames:
Grand Theft Auto Characters
Anti-heroes in Videogames: Agent 47 (Hitman)
Anti-heroes in Videogames: Duke Nukem
Anti-heroes in Videogames: Wario
TV/Film Anti-Hero vs. Videogame Anti-Hero
Moral Panic and the Anti-Hero

- In 2001, the US Surgeon General releases a report on videogaming and whether it causes violence.
- In 1997, 1999, 2003, and 2006, lawsuits have been filed against videogame companies citing their role in school shootings.
- By 2011, eleven states had banned the sale of mature games to minors before this was ruled unconstitutional by the Supreme Court.
Grand Theft Auto

- Structural violence.
- Not a murder simulator; an Urban simulator.
Grand Theft Auto: Vice City
Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas
Grand Theft Auto: Liberty City
Differences & Similarities

• Similar Characters:
  o Begins lower-class.
  o Male.
  o Criminal.
  o Violent.
  o Mean.
  o Misogynistic.

• Different Impressions:
  o Capitalism.
  o Race.
  o Class disenfranchisement.
Thank You