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Exploring the Dynamics of Knowledge Sharing in the Online Affinity Spaces of "Let's Play" YouTube Channels

A Dissertation in

Information and Knowledge Society

by

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This dissertation is dedicated to my father Marin Karaivanov who was taken from us before he could see my work reach its conclusion. All he ever wrote will always be reflected in my own words.

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ABSTRACT

With this dissertation the goal is to analyze the novel medium of video game streaming and more specifically the "Let's Play" video format as seen on YouTube and other online platforms. The practice has experienced a rapid growth in popularity over the course of the last decade since its emergence, which means many of its intricacies are yet to be accounted for by academic research. The intent is to engage with it from the perspective of learning and knowledge exchange and see whether such processes take place within the channels dedicated to this type of content, and if so to map out their dynamics, and reflect critically on the picture that emerges from the exploration of these virtual spaces.

Due to their very nature people learn instinctively by participating in games and through sharing experiences and stories with each other. However, if for whatever reason they have not yet developed the necessary faculties to interpret a given experience appropriately, they may remain unaware of the underlying complexity, which limits any potential learning outcomes. Hence one may argue that by positioning the streamer between the content of the game and the viewer, the "Let's Play" format provides a valuable opportunity to insert a competing or augmenting perspective on whatever is unfolding on the screen. This makes possible the stimulation of critical thinking, aids comprehension of how the game's systems function, and ultimately enriches the observer's ability to create new meaning.

In the process of investigating this claim the text utilizes the sociosemiotic theory of affinity spaces as put forward by the scholar James Paul Gee and proceeds to situate the aforementioned channels as such spaces. Working within this framework enables the pursuit of several intertwined threads of inquiry. On one hand, one can compare different affinity places in terms of the volume and quality of the knowledge shared therein, which then allows for the interpretation of the results as affected by both the video games the playthroughs are centred on, and the content creators themselves. On the other, one is able to evaluate how the users of the affinity spaces react to the playthroughs and interact with each other, and how that in turn influences the streamer and the content they produce.

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CHAPTER ONE: NEW PLAY FOR A NEW WORLD

"... what people thought (...) was it was going to be better TV, like TV 2.0 (...) 5,000 different sources giving you the specialty information about a horse channel and a dog channel and a cat channel and a saltwater aquarium channel, all these things would be coming down, and they would be providing all this stuff, and you could get it all in your home. But, of course, that missed the entire real revolution of the Web, which was that most of the content would be generated by the people using it. The Web was not better TV, it was the Web."

"There is a huge lag between the arrival and our use of something and our complete understanding of it, what its role is and what it means and its effects plus and minus. That gap, even when we speed up, is going to remain."

Kevin Kelly, "The Technium", Edge.com

1.1 Introduction

It is likely unnecessary to stress at this point in time the extent to which digital media and technology have globally transformed the manner in which people interact socially and with their environment. Many social and cultural institutions, previously considered to be an epitome of stability, have crumbled, or have been completely re-envisioned over the course of just a couple of decades. The printed press and traditional journalistic practices associated with it, the travelling industry, the banking and the financial sector, and many others would be largely unrecognizable at this point to anyone who could perhaps visit this age from no more than 30 years back. In certain parts of the world, the nature of labour itself has also began changing and with it even the base family structures believed to be the core of modern civilisation now undergo extensive alteration. As it well should, the academic world has recognized some of these trends and changes quite early on and has launched many investigations over the years into how traditional literacy practices and education in general may be adapted to utilize the potential of these emerging technologies, and how some of these tend to evolve naturally alongside them. This is to be a research project that follows in those very footsteps.

So it is then, that in the end of the second decade of the 21st century ours is a society largely defined by its information and communication technology. In referring to, and describing this complex state of affairs, the various scholars tend to talk about either "information society" – when emphasizing the main "currency" in exchange (Karvalics, 2007); "knowledge society" – when looking through the perspective of its homo sapiens inhabitants and the labour market (Hornidge, 2011); or "network society" – when stressing upon the defining form of socio-technical organization in place (Castells, 1996). Whichever term one prefers and without resorting to borderline naive technological determinism, it is nevertheless impossible to deny that ICTs in some shape or another currently form the backbone of almost every single field of practices that take place on Earth. Their penetration is so deep that it has prompted a whole set of reactionary ideologies and their respective ways of living aimed at escaping this techno-augmented reality, sometimes with very intriguing outcomes (see for ex. "The Dark Mountain" initiative). But however intriguing these may be, I would like to go in the opposite direction and focus on practices that have very much embraced (post)modernity and which are surprisingly difficult to define beyond the acknowledgement of that "loving" embrace.

Up until relatively recently it seemed pretty easy to distinguish between the different human activities: to the casual observer labour stood for hard work (unless you already had accumulated sufficient capital to do that work for you, or you were a popular artist lucky enough to be truly good at doing what you love); education happened in classrooms and campuses, and was carefully fragmented in clearly defined subjects; and entertainment was by presumption means to an escape from everyday reality – it was what people did for leisure when they did not sleep, work, study, or socialize. But could it be that nowadays these categories no longer apply in every scenario? And could it be that this is indeed a trend that will only continue to develop to develop and proceed to further blur the boundaries that used to define many socio-cultural practices?

As Johan Huizinga has written nearly eighty years ago in his seminal work "Homo Ludens", play, so easily dismissed in some social circles as something that belongs in childhood only, is in fact a crucial element underpinning the development of any known culture and society and without it none such would actually exist (Huizinga, 1938). With technological developments encroaching upon all and any human activity, it was perhaps in hindsight inevitable that these would change some of the most basic characteristics of what play and games would involve in the (post)modern world. Somewhere around acquiring the prefix "video", the social interaction of games – that original, truly core aspect of play – got left by the road, replaced for many by solitary man-machine interfaces, illustrated by the idea of flashing screens in darkened rooms. Technology however kept marching on, and with the advent of network society it has ended up re-socializing games in entirely novel ways.

In this particular case I would like to focus on a rather recent, yet already widespread phenomenon that has only began to notably manifest itself at the turn of the current decade. This would be video game streaming, also known as "Let's Play" (or simply LP) videos, when referring to its available on-demand episodic form, which may or may not comfortably fit in all three aforementioned categories. In the few years since I have first personally encountered it, "Let's Play" streams and their various offshoots have grown to the extent that they are currently among the most viewed type of content on the Internet as a whole. Eight of the top 25 most subscribed to channels on the third most visited website YouTube are dedicated to this kind of material, including the number one that has, as of the time of writing, over 100 million subscribers by itself[1].

The previously unthinkable bandwidth of current internet connections, the numerous data centres operating across borders, and the available excess of pure hardware computational power, have enabled players around the globe to broadcast their personal gameplay experiences in high quality video, usually augmented with their audio commentary, and often including a live feed of the person playing themselves. Depending on the platform of distribution and the chosen settings this footage – live or archived – is made readily available to friends, paying subscribers, or, as is most frequently the case, anyone with a computer and sensible internet connection. Considering that high definition video broadcasts tend to consume a lot of bandwidth, it is not surprising that one of the most popular video game streaming services at present – Twitch.tv, an initially small spin-off service that was eventually purchased for one billion dollars by Amazon, because Google were afraid of yet another monopoly lawsuit (Mac, 2014) – currently ranks among the top five websites and services in the Western world in terms of traffic, and it reports monthly viewings reaching well over 100 million (Needleman, 2015).

In essence, what streaming technology has done for video games is network them far beyond what the internal infrastructure of any one given title could potentially allow for (multiplayer over local and global networks has existed for quite a while now, but it rendered other players and the interactions with them as elements of the game itself) and in doing so open up a completely new set of affordances for social engagement and interaction. Prior to streaming, people could basically just play the games they owned, whereas currently they are able to share the experience, teach others the tricks of their trade, entertain audiences, communicate their thoughts and reflections on a variety of related issues – the list is long and only grows longer with time passing, as play has now become one rarely multifaceted concept.

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[1] Pewdiepie's YouTube channel as of the 1st of January 2020. Statistics provided by Google.

1.2 New Learning in New Spaces

Clearly "Let's Play" streaming and its rapid growth in popularity can be subject of analysis from many angles, but to a large extent my personal interest with it lies in evaluating its potential as a learning practice. Whatever the personal reasons of the viewers for watching, and the authors' – for sharing may be, the high demand for this activity is in place, with many sinking hundreds upon hundreds of hours of their time watching various video game streams. And in reflecting the basic logic of the free market, when there is demand the supply must follow. Hence an increasing number of people have began approaching the creation of such channels professionally in the sense that they research what viewers want (regular upload frequency, good recording quality, adequate gameplay skills, etc.) and some also attempt to develop niche markets based on the absence of certain qualities in most other popular channels. Surprisingly (or perhaps not), many of these absent qualities roughly seem to be those same things that an instructor would like to see in, or achieve with their students – ability to react and reflect critically on situations and events; rhetorical skills to tell a complex and perhaps controversial narrative in an involving manner; be able to recognize and appreciate the existence of different points of view, and further able to comment on those and discuss them constructively with their viewers; etc.

Naturally the question arises, what if one could stimulate the propagation of such qualities not only for the sake of those who can already appreciate them, but also for those who can't yet do so? Due to their very nature people learn instinctively by participating in games and through sharing experiences and stories with each other. However, if for whatever reason a person of any age has not yet developed the necessary faculties, or acquired the relevant knowledge to interpret a given experience in a sophisticated enough manner, they remain blind to the complexity of it all and this severely limits any learning outcomes they might attain (Tsui, 2006). Hence I would argue that by positioning the streamer between the content of the game and the recipient, the "Let's Play" format automatically provides an opportunity to insert a competing or augmenting perspective on whatever is unfolding on the screen, and in the process makes possible the stimulation of critical thinking, aides comprehension of how the game's systems function, and ultimately enriches the observer's ability to create new meaning. In that respect, when performed by relatively educated creators with a rich repertoire of semiotic resources at their disposal, "Let's Play" videos may prove to be a viable candidate to rank among other new digital media techniques, which facilitate multimodal literacy learning (Sandretto & Tilson, 2013), meaning-making (Neville, 2010), the inculcation of multimodal

discourse analysis skills, and the sensitisation in the use of multimodal resources (O'Halloran & Lim, 2011).

It is, in principle at least, a pretty straightforward idea, but as is often the case with indirect observables, discovering the correct means of testing it turned out to be everything but. My initial attempts to verify learning outcomes by evaluating narrative complexity on a person per person basis ran into some serious issues with a core tenet of social science. Namely, always make sure that you are measuring the construct you say you are measuring and not something else, and in this scenario I found out that I could not easily account for any pre-existing differences among my subjects. There was no way for me to "level the playing field" so to speak, until I realized that the environment I study said subjects in, may in a certain sense be doing that by itself. So I decided to conceptualize the YouTube channel where I began my research at as an affinity space (Gee, 2004) and refocus the comparative part of my study to evaluate prospective differences across multiple "Let's Play" channels rather than between individual participants within the same online space. Approaching learning in this way also made me aware and allowed me to account for another feature that LP performers exhibit, which is that by aggregating the input from their more active and more knowledgeable viewers and integrating it in their playthroughs they consequently feed it back to their audience and distribute said knowledge augmented with their personal understanding across all the space's members.

Affinity spaces are a concept originally developed by James Paul Gee as an alternative to the typical community of practice, which he felt is too dependent on membership (Gee, 2004). They are online based social-semiotic spaces, which emerge around generators[2] of semiotic content, where people bring in their real world attitudes, belief systems and predispositions, meaning that each affinity space emerges as a unique amalgamation of old practices transposed to a new context and so generates a brand new set of affordances to work with (Squire, 2011). Becoming attuned to the limitations and affordances of this new context is the key to participating effectively, but the space exerts no pressure over its users. Thus it can be seen as a type of a virtual third place, meaning a cyberspace for informal socialization, which exists and is attended separately from home or work (the latter two being the "first" and "second" places respectively) (Soukup, 2006).

The interactions that occur in such online spaces include both the direct involvement with the space itself and the socialization with other people who participate in the affinity space. Such spaces act like socio-cultural equalizers or unifiers of sorts, as they emphasize the common goals and

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[2] These can range from entertainment products (often encountered in popular culture), through professional activities, to abstract philosophical topics.

interests around which the space has emerged, and allow the multitude of differences that people of various ages, cultures and personal backgrounds usually have, to fade in the background. This "leveling" of the participants' identities is seen as one of the defining characteristics of affinity spaces (Steinkuehler, 2005). While "Let's Play" streams and channels do have a leader of sorts – the player whose journey brings everyone else in, that leadership is porous and the leader is a resource (Gee, 2004). The literacies that are developed in affinity spaces exhibit a variety of social traits, while both the individual members and the group as a whole tend to inhabit a multitude of roles that shift dynamically over time, and much like the affinity space itself, literacies are performed as sets of practices appropriated and transformed both by the individuals themselves, and the culture of each affinity space (Steinkuehler & Squire, 2009).

1.3 Aims and Scope of the Study

Throughout the text so far I have been constantly stressing the new aspects of processes, practices and environments, but this to be a social science dissertation meaning it has to be grounded into already existing and tested concepts and research methodologies. As the reader may have surmised already, my overarching aim is to attempt to bridge (at least to some extent) the gap that Kevin Kelly was talking about in that opening quote and in order to do that, one has to begin with strong foundations on at least one of the bridge's ends. Hence, I would like to offer here the formulations of my main research questions and say a few words about the rest of the theories and concepts that should allow for fulfilling the objectives of this study, before going into more detail about them in the methodology section.

New literacies and affinity spaces are both concepts, which were mentioned already and will form parts of the research questions, so they need to be operationalized accordingly. Affinity spaces are to be operationalized as virtual places where people who share certain common interests come together and through these shared interests they are able to explore knowledge of different nature, develop various literacies, advance their social and communication skills, and as a whole involve themselves in a learning activity through their pursuit for information and experience (Gee, 2004).

Among the multitude of new literacies the evaluation of only one is going to be pursued in this work, namely – gaming literacy, which is said to exist in the juncture of systems thinking, play and design. Systems thinking refers to an "understanding of the world as dynamic sets of parts with complex, constantly changing interrelationships – seeing the structures that underlie our world, and

comprehending how these structures function" (Zimmerman, 2009), while play is about exploring the interactions within and with said structures – improvised and bound by rules simultaneously. A "literacy based on play is a literacy of innovation and invention" (Zimmerman, 2009). Finally, design is about the creation and understanding of the sets of possibilities governing said interactions and thus mediates between systems and play (Zimmerman, 2009). Within the context of this type of affinity space, gaming literacy will be operationalized as the frequency of knowledge transactions in user comments, which relate to any of the three aspects of gaming literacy as defined above.

With all of the above taken into account, I have formulated three research questions as follows[3]:

1. To *compare*:

   Can there be observed a significant difference among different affinity spaces that have emerged around playthroughs of the same game, in terms of the knowledge shared therein? What about among the same affinity spaces, but with different generators?

2. To *describe*:

   What types of discourse are utilized in these affinity spaces and along what lines do they influence the content produced in the LP channels?

3. To *explain*:

   What are the factors that contribute to enabling potential learning outcomes in the design of the video game that is used for an LP and the performative behaviour of the player who is making it?

Among the variety of "Let's Play" types and platforms that host them (more on that in the next chapter) I will be focusing more specifically on the on-demand, pre-recorded, narrated, episodic playthroughs made available as playlists on YouTube channels. There are several reasons for this choice – most practical in nature, but by far it has to do with what Lammers et al. would call "the instability and impermanence of web-based environments and artefacts", which as they observe, can profoundly affect the process of data collection (Lammers, Curwood & Magnifico, 2012). The majority of live streaming LP types, as distributed on Twitch.tv for example, do not archive the communication on the viewers' side that takes place during the stream, while the recordings of the actual streams are also archived only for a limited time. Meanwhile YouTube keeps everything, even content that is flagged as copyrighted and eventually blocked across the Internet, and I can still receive the data privately from the channel owner even if situation such as that arises.

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[3] Terminology featured in the formulations will be clarified in the chapter dedicated to the respective question.

While the main focus will remain on literacy and learning, with the descriptive part of the research I hope to provide an in-depth look at the formation and functioning of these channels as loci of entertainment, socialization and communication. On one hand, the variety of reasons people engage with said channels in the first place can be reasonably expected to directly affect these channels' direction of development, while on the other hand it will be illuminating to see whether the participants traverse between this variety of uses and how often. This will be explored through the investigation of the types of discourses practiced within the affinity spaces. It is important to note that social-semiotic networks tend to extend far beyond the YouTube channels that lie at their core and may connect to any and all corners of the gaming industry. As such they may include other streamers' YouTube channels; live streams taking place on different platforms; crowdfunding practices utilizing various online services; and moreover designer diaries, marketing materials, Wiki websites, and other not related to video game streaming per se sources.

1.4 Methodology overview

Before moving forward I will provide a quick overview of the methodology underlying the various modes of inquiry that this research project employs. When taken as a whole, my approach can be understood as informed by the extension of connective ethnography (after Hine, 2007) – affinity space ethnography, as put forward by Magnifico, Lammers and Curwood (2013).

The term introduced above has to do with the move in anthropology that was required to account for the study of online communities, or for example organizations that utilize networking to a dominant extent in their functioning. In the last few decades, academics conducting ethnographic investigations into various Internet practices have made numerous attempts to configure their field sites, traditionally associated with geographic boundaries, in order to accommodate the movement and interconnectivity inherent to online spaces. More specifically, in her examination of the science of biological systematics, Hine originated the concept of "connective ethnography" to describe how she explored the connections between the multitude of activities that took place including group message communication, institutional observation, formal and informal interviews, and accessing hyperlinked information (Hine, 2007). Several years later, Alecia Marie Magnifico and a couple of her colleagues further elaborated on the idea of connective ethnography, as to be able to employ it in their qualitative studies of collaborative learning in ICT mediated settings, stating that "with *affinity space ethnography*, we trace and map the connections among and across members' actions in

diverse portals as they are represented in texts, artifacts, genres, and discourses" (Magnifico et al., 2013; emphasis in the original). This statement very much describes the goals of my own research and therefore I will utilize their approach in the pursuit of answers to the three research questions as posed earlier in this text.

Individually, each of said questions will be investigated with more customized solutions seeing that methodology should follow in a direct and natural manner from the research questions themselves. Firstly, the content and frequency of knowledge transactions within the affinity space will be defined and evaluated by means of qualitative data analysis based on emergent codes and categories (Saldana, 2009), and the resulting unique analytical framework I termed CFT (Comment Function Tags). The same data will be then reorganized by type of discourse and furthermore epistemic activity (Arvaja, 2012) when knowledge transactions are concerned. And finally, J. P. Gee's Discourse analysis (2008) will be adapted for the purposes of the last research question in order to investigate the performance of the streamers and how they narrate their interactions within the game. Any method-specific terminology used above will be elaborated upon in the literature review.

1.5 Significance of the study: situating the "Let's Play" streaming media in the context of mass self-communication and the Web 2.0 paradigm

In its short lifespan, the "Let's Play" practice has managed to develop quite the interesting and complex character. At least partially inspired from narrative and performative visual media like movies and theatre, but merged with the manner of execution of modern television's talk shows, all the while incorporating the real-time use of a video game medium as an interactive stage for the resulting performance, narration and discussion, the final product is a peculiar, hybrid form of online entertainment, the popularity of which is everything but self-explanatory. The activity has numerous implications in terms of how it relates to contemporary consumer culture; to what extent it can acquire a political and resistive potential; whether it can be applied with education in mind; how does it function as a labour practice; etc. The fact that so many people partake as either producers or viewers of such content, makes it an important instance of the mass self-communication paradigm as defined by the prominent scholar Manual Castells (Castells, 2009).

Mass self-communication is a term coined to describe the novel type of communication characteristic of the network society that is no longer compatible with either interpersonal or mass communication. The "mass" part of the label signifies the content's ability to reach global audience

due to the medium utilized, while the "self" underscores several attributes – that the production is self-generated, that the configuration of the potential audience is self-directed, and that the process of acquiring the content from the network is self-selected (Castells, 2009). In being the "newest kid on the block", mass self-communication does not inherit the communicative landscape from the two aforementioned types, but instead it coexists and interacts with them, complementing and enriching each other's functionality (Castells, 2009). Similar to other attempts to delineate the apparent merger of the clearly defined information consumption and production identities of old, like for ex. the "prosumer" (Ross, 2013), the concept of mass self-communication emphasizes the emergence of a creative audience that is actively engaged with the process of meaning production (Castells, 2009). What Castells theorizes as being unique to mass self-communication and as exercising the strongest effects on contemporary socio-cultural practices is "the articulation of all forms of communication into a composite, interactive, digital hypertext that includes, mixes, and recombines in their diversity the whole range of cultural expressions conveyed by human interaction" (Castells, 2009: 55).

Web 2.0 technologies have indeed afforded a new kind of voice to the (post)modern communicative subjects and an "unprecedented autonomy" to "communicate at large" (Castells, 2009:136). It has granted players a massive audience that up until recently was not existent, not only in terms of lack of access – no one really expected that this type of content will be of interest to anyone, let alone generate the levels which current figures suggest. As we shall see further in the text, even if a channel begins modestly, for ex. with uploads or streams of strictly game footage from a single title, with the steady accumulation of followers (assuming the project catches on of course), come an increasing variety of suggestions, know-how exchange, debates, etc. For the majority of successful channels this meant diversifying of content, not only in terms of titles being covered, but also in terms of the overall approach to the subjects of play and gaming themselves. In this way the streamers found themselves as representing a viable alternative to corporate emissions and the commercial outlets of the industry, which had previously dictated the rules of the global discussion space for digital games and all related topics. At least on the surface, gaming culture appears to have made a sudden and sharp turn from being the poster child of digital consumerism. In fact many more topics are now included in the conversation – social and political subjects and groups previously under-represented, or avoided altogether. The communities that have developed around the key nodes in this so formed and expanded network are constantly bustling with activity, some of it sadly far from constructive or benevolent and this state of affairs has naturally provided fertile grounds for conflict, with some of the bigger clashes and controversies still burning, years after the first salvoes were fired (Kain, 2014).

Ultimately, much like their unlikely development in an actual profession, the production of "Let's Play" videos might seem as an unusual candidate to be considered for educational purposes, yet when defined in terms of new literacy practices and situated as a informal learning practice, the potential is there and it merits investigation. I have already commented on most of the reasons why that is the case, but it is worth reiterating that well prepared LP producers may possibly turn the amount of hours spent on fleeting entertainment into a kind of a productive learning process. By uncovering the dynamics of knowledge distribution, and which aspects of the profiles of the authors work to bring in audience that can proactively aid said distribution, the findings from this study can provide the framework alongside which such preparation could take place and simultaneously will uncover much uncharted territory as this phenomenon, while already spread to immense proportions, is still so new that it has at this point very rarely been featured in academic literature. Therefore, it is this study's aim to further advance game media literacy theory and to launch an in-depth investigation into some of the more recent forms of emergent learning technology.

1.6 Summary of chapter contents

Now, before moving forward, I will briefly summarize the goals and contents of each of the following chapters for the purpose of aiding the reader into navigating the text with fewer (hopefully none whatsoever) difficulties.

Chapter 2 – Background and typology of video game streaming

Chapter two is where I will go over the origins of the video game streaming practices and how they have developed over the course of their short time of coming into being, accompanied by some anecdotal evidence. I will introduce the reader to the basic distinctions between the general categories of this type of streaming media and the main approaches that people who engage with it employ. The key technical characteristics of the practice and all the necessary terminology will be covered as well. This part of the text will conclude with a brief discussion of the economic and prosumption aspects of video game streaming and its present reality as a form of digital labour under informational and media capitalism.

Chapter 3 – Literature review

This chapter will be dealing with an extensive review of the state-of-art literature in the most important research areas directly concerning this study. First and foremost I will detail the theory of social semiotics and the concept of affinity spaces in particular (Gee, 2004), which serve to define my approach to YouTube Let's Play channels in this research project, and how they differ from certain alternative ways of conceptualizing other techno-social forms of organization. This will be followed by an exploration of the contemporary ways of understanding literacy in its various incarnations and how the latter can potentially be acquired through one's productive participation in affinity spaces. Next, I will present some of the existing work on situated and distributed cognition and explain the process of human learning as seen through the ecological knowing perspective I choose to subscribe to. And finally, I will situate said "Let's Play" channels as affinity spaces by accounting for all their key characteristics and further discussing any differences and variations present with their respective implications.

Chapter 4 – Research methodology

As its title suggests, this will be the chapter to provide an overview of the methodology involved in researching the questions stated in the introduction. Here I will define the theory that is utilized in my approach of choice in selecting the field sites and samples, and how the processes of data collection and analysis will be conducted. Important concepts for later parts of the text, such as discourse types and epistemic activities will be introduced here, alongside a detailed explanation of how Discourse analysis will be applied on narrated gameplay as a source of data.

Chapter 5 – Affinity space generators

The contents of the fifth chapter have to do with the games that will act as generators for the affinity spaces in question. I will use these pages not only to detail the design, narratives and mechanics of the chosen titles, but also to argument said choice and hypothesize on how this particular selection may play out in terms of aiding, or deteriorating the production of knowledge and the emergence of external grammar within a given affinity space. The games to be featured here are in order: Dark Souls, Resident Evil 7, Nioh, and Deus Ex: Mankind Divided.

Chapter 6 – Comparison and evaluation of the learning potential of the featured affinity spaces

With this part of the study I will attempt to answer my first and second research questions. Namely whether there are significant differences in the viewer-produced practices and content to be found among affinity spaces, which deal with different LPs of a given game-generator, and also how do the various titles compare when played by the same streamer. And also what types of discourses are utilized by the users of the affinity spaces and how that affects the content of the playthroughs themselves. In order to do so I will first explicate the system, which I have developed and utilized to interpret and categorize the users' input from the comment sections of all the relevant YouTube videos, and present the resulting data. This in turn will be followed by an analysis of said results on a per game basis and an evaluation of the most complex entries available for each LP. Finally, the chapter will close with a complete list of the main findings and a more in-depth discussion of their implications, both for my questions and potential future research.

Chapter 7 – Exploring types of discourse and paths of influence

In this chapter I return to the comment sections of the four Dark Souls LPs to investigate the various types of discourses practiced in these affinity spaces and how those influence the LP content itself. In doing so I will focus the reader's attention on any emergent themes and what they tell us about the users of that space and furthermore, with respect to elaboration and sharing discourses in particular, which epistemic activities are applicable in these LP settings and what is their utility.

Chapter 8 – Discourses of a "Let's Play": Discourse analysis of the language-in-use in the affinity spaces of "Let's Play" YouTube channels

As the title betrays, the eighth chapter will focus on investigating the role of Discourse in the performances and interactions taking place within the affinity spaces that have emerged around the shared playthroughs of video games, which populate the LP channels of YouTube. For this purpose J. P. Gee's Discourse Analysis will be implemented to explore the situated meaning of language as it is utilized during the processes of production of certain LP episodes, i.e. the recorded performance of the players, and their consumption – that is through the contents of their comment sections. This part of the text will retain the comparative angle following from the previous chapters by dealing specifically with the two LP channels that have the highest and lowest levels of knowledge exchange as established early on.

Chapter 9 – Knowledge exchange as a function of aesthetic choice – a discussion

In accordance with its title, the penultimate chapter will aim to discuss the processes of knowledge exchange in YouTube channels via the lenses of aesthetic theory and more precisely its application to the field of video games as conceived by the social scientist Graeme Kirkpatrick. This analysis should further augment the reader's understanding of gameplay as such and some of the implications of its use as streaming media when different kinds of audiences are considered.

Chapter 10 – Conclusion

And last, but clearly not least, the reader will encounter the final chapter of the thesis by way of its conclusion. Here I will summarize my findings from the previous chapters as they pertain to the three research questions and engage in a discussion following from the implications of said findings. In the process I will revisit the concepts of "backseating", thematic hotspots, streamer performance profiles, as well as certain other discoveries, which have emerged as important in the course of research. Furthermore, the conclusion will detail questions for future investigation and probe into how this text relates to some of the more urgent topics in the larger field of video games research such as the political radicalization of a lot of the online content, including proposing various ways of approaching and potentially even resolving these issues.

CHAPTER TWO: BACKGROUND AND TYPOLOGY OF VIDEO GAME STREAMING

In the following chapter I will go over the origins of the video game streaming practices and how they have developed over the course of their short time of coming into being, accompanied by some anecdotal evidence. I will introduce the reader to the basic distinctions between the general categories of this type of streaming media and the main approaches that people who engage with it employ. The key technical characteristics of the practice and all the necessary terminology will be covered as well. This part of the text will conclude with a brief discussion of the economic and prosumption aspects of video game streaming and its present reality as a form of digital labour under informational and media capitalism. This piece, together with Chapter Three serve to inform the reader of the context of the study and as such are very much prerequisite before I can introduce my methodology in a more elaborate manner in Chapter Four.

As I mentioned earlier in the text, there is currently a rich variety of video game streaming practices available online, but naturally things were not always this way. As a genre "Let's Play" did not even remotely resemble its current form either. In this chapter then, I will make a short account on how has the practice developed over the course of the last decade or so, and attempt to draw a rudimentary typology of the content, so that the reader has the necessary basic knowledge to orient themselves in the topic and its related terminology. So first of all, where and when did the "Let's Play" phenomenon actually appear for the first time?

It seems next to impossible to figure out the exact origins of something born native to the Internet jungle, especially since the key words refer to a phrase that may be used in great many contexts, but according to the Let's Play Archive[4] website and an article written on the topic of this very question for the gaming blog Kotaku, the original occurrence of an activity of this nature has supposedly been somewhere on the message boards of a website called "Something Awful" (Klepek, 2015). Unfortunately a record of that particular thread can no longer to be found anywhere, but as an example of what those very early "Let's Play" performances used to be like, the author of the Kotaku article offers this thread, where the original poster is starting up a new game of The Oregon Trail[5] and is looking for people to come along for the ride. Bearing in mind that a decade ago there is no streaming video being used, only the occasional screenshot, what transpired roughly went something like this:

> *Luigi Thirty wants to know why they're setting out west, and needs folks to come along. Unfortunately, the images themselves have been lost to outdated image hosting services, but we know the group of five were bankers, and it was decided that they should leave in March. From there, the thread begins debating what to buy, whether or not to ford the river (they do), and endless laughing when things inevitably go awry and the adventurers start biting the dust.*

> *19 pages later, the thread ended with people offering Oregon Trail strategies, repeating memes, and complaining about other Something Awful members not liking the thread idea.*

> *Even though the term Let's Play has become a way of describing talking over a game, often from start to finish, it began as a way of rallying people to literally play a video game together.*

> *Patrick Klepeck, Kotaku*

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[4] http://lparchive.org/
[5] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Oregon_Trail_(video_game)

It would seem then that in its very early incarnation, "Let's Play" was essentially an attempt to provide a kind of asynchronous multiplayer to old games that did not have any, and in the process combine that with informal socialization and discussions about the game itself. These particular aspects of the practice have not necessarily changed. Even in single player games taking place in real time where all decisions and actions are being obviously done by the player only, their narration almost always refers to the player in plural, thus including both the character and all the spectators in the performance (Karaivanov, 2011). Live streaming of video games does in fact allow the viewers to make suggestions and react in real time through Internet Relay Chat modules, while the uploads in an episodic format offer people the option to leave comments under each session. However, since live streaming requires higher speed Internet connections it was the latest of all LP methods to be adopted. The episodic video format came first and YouTube was to be its chief platform of choice. The website was created around the same the aforementioned "Something Awful" users began to utilize their message boards for the purpose, but it took a good few years for the practice to really make the switch from text to video and still was largely unknown. The real explosion of popularity occurred around the year 2010 when a little game called Minecraft arrived on the scene[6].

Arguably the game that has influenced the most "Let's Play" in its current form, Minecraft is a rather complex, nonlinear sandbox game about exploring and rebuilding a world made of blocks, which especially in those early years was particularly impenetrable. Due to the financial limitations of its sole maker Marcus Persson, it didn't feature any tutorials on how to play it, or any other assistance for that matter. This however ended up being one of the main features of the game as the challenge to learn how to play it made the game that much more involving, and LP videos became the main tool to allow one to do so, while sharing the acquired knowledge with others took the form of a precious "social currency", the effect being particularly pronounced among children (Thompson, 2016). As of the time of writing YouTube hosts over seventy million Minecraft videos and the name of the game is second only to "music" as the most searched term on the website.

Once Minecraft and its multibillion dollar sales had lent some credibility to the notion that watching others play a game instead of playing it yourself may not after all be as strange as it sounds, the numbers of the people and titles involved in the practice spiked notably, and so did the variety in the ways people approached the very idea of what constitutes a "Let's Play". Meanwhile, Internet bandwidth kept increasing and live video game streaming also became a viable option – Twitch.tv launched in June, 2011 and its popularity and value soared over the next few years, which in turn led to even more possibilities of how play could be performed and how audiences can be

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[6] Source: Google Trends.

reached and brought into the practice. It is thus evident that with this new digital media landscape getting crowded so quickly, it becomes necessary to be able to organize all the genres, approaches, and variations somewhat, which is what I will try to briefly outline in the next few paragraphs.

Among the few academic works available on the topic, some authors have suggested that live video game streaming should be divided in "e-sports", "speedrunning" (when a player attempts to get from a game's beginning to its end as fast as possible) and "Let's Play" playthroughs (Smith et al., 2013) and I generally agree with their suggestions, with a few caveats, the first and foremost being that by focusing entirely on live streaming, they do not account for the on-demand practices, which preceded and in many cases influenced the formation of their real-time counterparts. The main difference between the live and on-demand video game streaming is that in the case of the former (irrelevant of the platform utilized, as they all support this) the streamer is able to communicate with their viewers in real time and follow their messages and reactions through a chat window, which directly affects how they will behave both personally and in the game. This is of course optional and the streamer can disable any such connectivity, if they so prefer. In the latter scenario, the footage, narrated or not, is archived, edited in some measure, and subsequently uploaded onto a dedicated video-sharing website, with the classic YouTube being the most popular platform (not to be confused with YouTube Gaming, which is aimed at live streaming).

In terms of main genres however both live and on-demand streaming are largely similar. Naturally playing live allows a more inclusive performance where the audience may interact semi-directly with the game's situations, if the stream is so set up, in a manner not unlike the pen and paper role playing games a la Dungeons & Dragons. For example the streamer may ask the audience to vote on decisions or suggest actions that are not immediately obvious to the one playing the game. Twitch.tv even experimented on several occasions with direct input from *all* viewers present by modifying the chat functions of the stream to act as a game controller of sorts, by averaging all incoming commands before executing the next action within the game, aka "Twitch Plays".

But such unorthodox approaches are pretty rare and most cases of video game streaming fall within either a narrative oriented gameplay type, where the viewers follow the experience of the player and listen to their ongoing commentary on what is unfolding on the screen, i.e. "Let's Play", or competitive gameplay where the game proceeds in rounds or matches and the player takes on other human opponents. E-sports is a variation of the latter, where during big official tournaments in particularly popular competitive games the streams copy the template of regular sport events on television wholesale, with a director that picks camera angles, studio live commentary, interviews during the breaks, and so on. And last but not least, we have all the streams that fall somewhere

between these two main categories, where the player may utilize a narrative oriented game for competitive purposes or (much rarer) the other way around. This third category is where Smith et al.'s "speedrunning" would belong to, but as there are many ways to alter the intended experience in order to provide additional challenge, or to produce a result as to be able to compare it with other players' "scores", I do not think the term should be granted a titular position for this bracket.

Apart of the narrative-competitive axis there is one other important reference line that must be taken into account when defining video game streaming. This is what Austin Walker refers to as active and passive streaming postures (Walker, 2014). According to the author these are "key strategies of control" that have to do with the extent to which the streamers manage their online personality (Walker, 2014). In the active posture streamers basically approach the activity in what I referred to earlier as a professional manner, utilizing additional equipment for the recording and broadcasting processes. Such streams usually include webcam footage in a part of the screen, so that viewers can watch the player's reactions to the game, which footage often uses green screen technique to blend with the main broadcast from the game (see Figure 1). Active streamers are self-conscious of their performance and playing style, and over time develop a repertoire of comedic or dramatic nature to augment their playthroughs. The resulting personal identity is not unlike that of a stage actor focused exclusively on improvised performances, and if it proves attractive enough, such streamers tend to build a surprisingly dedicated following and frequently a multi-layered community emerges around the persona – the affinity spaces that are the focal points of this investigation.

Figure 1: Screenshot representative of the Twitch.tv interface at the time of writing (Twitch.tv; 2016).

Someone with a passive streaming posture on the other hand is basically playing their game as usual, but with the sessions being broadcasted online. Such streamers do not invest in, or

use additional equipment, instead utilizing only what is integrated in their gaming platform of choice (some of the more recent consoles, like PlayStation 4, come with a pretty extensive set of streaming-oriented features as is). Unlike their "active" they are also not likely to pursue any commercial gain from their streaming activities, which is in part why Walker sees passive streamers as "limited in their ability to build any sort of personal reputation and cannot attract communities around their play" (Walker, 2014). Also, although he never mentions it, there seem to be a lot of practitioners who do not necessarily fit in either category, but instead fall somewhere between. Ultimately, Walker's is still a very useful classification that will inform my choices of affinity spaces to compare going forward.

Lastly, in terms of classifying video game streams and LP playthroughs in particular, there are two other characteristics to take notice of – whether the playthrough will have its commentary performed live or if it is going to be added post factum during the editing process, and whether it is conducted "blind" or not. The latter refers to whether the streamer has played the game before or has researched it to some extent. Usually "blind" is taken to mean completely unaware of game content and mechanics beyond perhaps a trailer or other advertisements for the title in question. Needless to say, being both live and "blind" are of crucial importance for narrative-oriented single-player games and most respected streamers prefer to approach their playthroughs in this way. The risk is of course that certain games might end up too difficult or too confusing for the streamer to handle in a manner that is entertaining to watch and instead turn into a frustrating experience for both the player and their audience, most likely resulting in the streamer dropping the LP attempt altogether.

Finally, before I continue on with the next chapter, I would also like to talk to some length about the video game streaming practices as a form of digital labour, which indeed is where things currently are – a far cry from the message board beginnings of "Let's Play" mere ten years earlier. It was hinted in the opening that for many the very possibility of playing games for a living would be a dream come true and the streaming and video sharing platforms like Twitch and YouTube do a lot to promote this kind of thinking. The reality is however that the vast majority of streamers have to maintain their channels in addition to regular employment, and even those who do go the full length and begin to make a living as a partner of a streaming service, do so predominantly by relying on viewer donations (Walker, 2014). Considering for example how much video game promotion and marketing currently goes through such channels, for example in the form of select streamers being granted access to a pre-release version of the game so they can showcase it to their audience, the work – playbour (Ross, 2013) or not – is being done for free.

In this regard video game streaming joins the ranks of numerous other voluntary digital content creation practices, such as [insert a few examples] that create value for the corporate Internet platforms. These produce data commodities that are being sold as such to the advertisers (with targeted advertising being at the heart of this capital accumulation model) and generate vast profits for those who operate the infrastructure. However such practices are not recognized as labour and there is little to no remuneration being issued to the content creators (Fuchs & Sevignani, 2012). Meanwhile, YouTube's specific monetization policy for showing advertisements during one's content works in such a way that even videos that have close to a million views do not guarantee that much of a payoff (Hamilton, 2013). Taken as a whole, video game streaming is far in the process of being transformed to fit the commodity logic within the context of contemporary media informational capitalism. Undoubtedly this state of affairs should not be ignored in any in-depth analysis of the practice as it is likely to affect many of its aspects directly.

In this chapter I traced the origins of the video game streaming practices and the Let's Play videos in particular and the stages these went through on the way to their current forms – from the early steps on now defunct message boards to the multi-billion dollar services like Twitch.tv. Special attention was paid to some crucial moments along that path, such as the influence of specific titles like Minecraft and the technological affordances made available by certain platforms like Youtube. Finally, I also presented the various aspects that define how different streamers choose to approach the practice and develop their streaming personalities, and how that affects the process of engaging their audience, by discussing the work of Austin Walker on streaming postures (Walker, 2014).

CHAPTER THREE: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter will be dealing with an extensive review of the state-of-art literature in the most important research areas directly concerning this study. First and foremost I will detail the theory of social semiotics and the concept of affinity spaces in particular (Gee, 2004), which serve to define my approach to YouTube Let's Play channels in this research project, and how they differ from certain alternative ways of conceptualizing other techno-social forms of organization. This will be followed by an exploration of the contemporary ways of understanding literacy in its various incarnations and how the latter can potentially be acquired through one's productive participation in affinity spaces. Next, I will present some of the existing work on situated and distributed cognition and explain the process of human learning as seen through the ecological knowing perspective I choose to subscribe

to. And finally, I will situate said "Let's Play" channels as affinity spaces by accounting for all their key characteristics and further discussing any differences and variations present with their respective implications.

3.1 Affinity Spaces, New Literacies, and Learning Ecologies

Learning is among one of the most complex objects of study in the social sciences, not least because it is a thoroughly interdisciplinary topic. There are undoubtedly cultural, social, cognitive-neurological, and psychological facets to it, and which are considered most the important tends to largely depend on which particular field one is an expert in. But since the very concept of the process is framed so differently in each of those diverse perspectives, it may even be the case that questions put forward in one field provide the answers sought after in another. Thus it is only natural that for conducting a research focused on learning in some respects, I will borrow from works product of several different academic disciplines. More concretely, for this particular project my main sources are social semiotics, literacy studies, and situativity theory.

3.1.1 The theory of social-semiotic and affinity spaces – conception and application

Online communities like affinity spaces have been frequented as a subject of research in recent years due to the Internet acquiring paramount importance in many people's lives and the gradual extension of governmental and supra-national education policies to include and promote lifelong learning (see for example the work done by the European Commission in that direction)[7]. Formations of this type tend to weave a support network by enrolling people with wide range of competences committed to topics of common interest. Due to the variety of individual expertise and backgrounds involved affinity spaces can provide a rich interactive depository of knowledge and a structure that facilitates assistance exchanges. The affinity aspect is emphasized in the definition of these online spaces as their users find them captivating and congenial enough that the learning processes that take place within the space actually enables them to re-evaluate and reconfigure how they perceive themselves (Davies, 2006).

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[7] http://ec.europa.eu/education/tools/llp_en.htm

There also exists a fair amount of scholarly interest and academic literature on the topic of designing various online spaces for learning and collaborative creative practices – virtual worlds and environments for the purposes of education (for ex. Barab et al., 2005; or Ketelhut et al. 2007), but these, while very much related to the larger discussion of informal learning, approach it from a very different angle and as such will not be explored in this literature review.

Now when I first introduced affinity spaces as a concept (see 1.2), I mentioned that it is a type of social-semiotic space (SSS for short), which is also a term originated by James Paul Gee. SSS emerge around content of multimodal signs to which people attach meanings to, and which are produced by a generator (Gee, 2004). The generator can be a lot of things, but both in his original and in our current case it happens to be a video game. According to Gee there are two ways to interpret the signs – internally and externally. The former is referring to the actual content of the game generator – the mechanics, the virtual space and characters, specific terminology, and so on, while the latter deals with what people do and perceive as taking place in the real world in relation to what is happening internally, like discussing the game in question with others, their awareness of how the game is being designed as such, or how the media covers the title. Thus every social-semiotic space can be said to have both internal and external "grammar", which are emergent phenomena resulting from interactions between human and non-human actors (Gee, 2004). Finally, the last component every SSS has is a portal, i.e. an access point where one can enter said space, for ex. a YouTube channel or a dedicated website, where the portal can actually be a generator and the other way around (Gee, 2004).

In his work in socio-linguistics Gee developed the concept of Discourses, which he also utilized in analyzing the emergent cultures of social-semiotic spaces. In this case capitalizing the term serves to distinguish it from discourse in the general semantic, or the strictly Foucauldian sense to which it is nevertheless closer to (Gee, 2008). This analytical framework is employed to describe said culture and investigate how does the individual participant become recognized and enculturated through their interactions within the space. The Discourse serves as a tool to explore the practices of meaning-making and aids the researcher in distinguishing between the central and peripheral ones. Finally, the Discourse emphasizes the reciprocity of the socio-cultural interactions in an affinity space as partaking individuals are not just passive "recipients" of cultural norms, values and behaviours, but instead are very much involved in their building and rebuilding (Gee, 2008).

When Gee talks about Discourse analysis with a capital D what he means is going beyond what regular discourse analysis stands for, i.e. language-in-use to enact activities and identities (Gee, 1999). The Discourse comes into play when the language is combined with "other stuff" in order for

its user to enact a certain someone doing certain something (for ex. a PhD student defending their thesis). This "other stuff" can be a lot of things: clothes, gestures, symbols, tools, technologies, values, attitudes, emotions, and so on (Gee, 1999). This by definition makes for a very dense web of interconnected elements and it is up to the researcher to focus the analysis, by transforming the very large toolset, which this approach provides according to their specific needs. Indeed Constance Steinkuehler once wrote ten pages of Discourse analysis of the line "afk g2g to ef ot regen no poms" taken from the chat of the game Lineage 2 (Steinkuehler, 2004).

A lot of attention in Discourse analysis is focused on the situations in which language is used, while also remaining reflexive that language also creates the situation in which it is used. In the case of video game streaming practices it is somewhat unique that streamers are always locked in two different situations simultaneously – the one in the game they are currently playing, and the one where they sit in front of their computer, communicating with their viewers. As such their use of language constantly oscillates between the two frames, adding yet another layer of complexity onto the proceedings. In Discourse analysis terms that means that there are two intertwined situation networks to consider, each composed of five aspects – semiotic, activity aspect, material, political & sociocultural (Gee, 1999). Language is used in order to execute six "building tasks", which taken together weave the situation network – five for each of the aspects and sharing the same names (except for the material, which is termed world building) – and connection building, which deals with how people make assumptions about the way in which a given interaction connects to past or future moments (Gee, 1999). Ultimately, what doing Discourse analysis means is to ask a set of questions about how the language used in a given situation is utilized to produce each of the aspects of that situation's network.

Depending on the situation the language is transcribed into units of variable complexity, at the core of which is the line, also known as an "idea unit", with each new line delivering another piece of new information about the situation. The narration is further grouped into stanzas, which are groups of "lines about one important event, happening, or state of affairs at one time and place, or it focuses on a specific character, theme, image, topic, or perspective" (Gee, 1999:109). Further up, there is a macrostructure level, where stanzas are organized depending on their position and function in a story (or an argument, or a plan, etc.), if one is being told. The six stages of organization are setting, catalyst, crisis, evaluation, resolution, and coda (Gee, 1999). However due to the nature of the subject of analysis of this specific research project – i.e. an event taking place within a given episode of serialized gameplay content, being narrated and recorded in real time – macrostructure

analysis of any kind will not be performed. Instead the focus will be entirely on the stanza level and any conclusions drawn will follow the evaluation of the overlapping situation networks at that scale.

It was brought up earlier in the text that Gee developed the affinity space concept to move away from the popular in the situated learning literature "communities of practice" discourse and here I will illustrate why I too find his approach more applicable for this project by explaining the differences between the two in more detail. Gee of course acknowledges that this particular model of situated learning and cognition as established by Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger (Lave & Wenger, 1991) has been of great use to his and other academic work in the field, but wants to be able to apply its fundamental principles without some of the implications the term "community" entails (Gee, 2004). In this way he aims to transplant the theory to an online digital space, which is much more fluid and flexible when compared to the stable and far less porous boundaries presumed by a community, or the social cohesion and connectedness that tend to be prescribed to its members. As a result of approaching the site as a space rather than a community allows for the focus to be shifted to the practices of the space itself instead of the space's users, while the researcher is spared having to label people, assign them to groups and estimate to what extent they belong and under what conditions (Gee, 2004).

The latter is a very important distinction for LP YouTube channels as they cannot be said to comprise a community in any, but the widest sense of the word. These are fluid digital spaces where access is allowed to everyone (bar those whose accounts are actually banned by Google) and where membership is a nonfactor. Some users limits themselves to exploring only fractions of the space, while others scour it in its entirety. The activities and social interactions of a large segment of the user population are fleeting and transient with only a core group forming around the streamer that continuously works to maintain and develop their socio-technical network further, but even that cannot be seen as a cohesive structure with any semblance of rigidity. However, as this project focuses on the activities of all that leave trace within the space – both core and periphery alike – conceptualizing the object of research as a community of practice (or interest, or knowledge for that matter) would make precious little sense indeed.

There are eleven attributes in total that define an affinity space. These are: a paramount common endeavour or interest (and not any other organizing principle like race or class); the space is shared by novices and experts alike, and all in between; the space can become a site of resource production; there are many ways to participate available, and there are many way in which one can acquire status or recognition; the activities in the space can cause changes in the core space generator (i.e. the game in question); the space encourages the use and development of a variety of

knowledge types – intensive and extensive (i.e. specialized, for ex. game mechanics, or broad – like lore), individual and distributed, dispersed (i.e. located outside of the space itself) and tacit (skills that cannot be verbalized); finally any leaders that the space may have (like the streamer at the core of the channel) are not boss figures by any means, but rather function as resources for the others. It is important to note that if a given SSS does not have all eleven attributes accounted for, that does not ipso facto mean it is not an affinity space at all, but rather that it is not entirely a "paradigmatic affinity space" as such (Gee, 2004).

With all of this taken into account I believe I have made my case as to why affinity spaces are a much more flexible and ultimately useful theoretical tool to work with in order to explore learning processes in the setting I am focusing on, as compared to communities of practice. The latter have three explicit requirements for a community to be classified as one – domain (that is the common sphere of interest, which is accounted for), community and practice and the latter two are quite restrictive in terms of what can belong to them. The issues with CoP's definition of community were already commented on, while the last one requires every single person involved to be a practitioner of whatever it is that the community is focusing on, but due to the specificities of streaming channels, this is not a condition that can possibly be satisfied – after all some visitors, regular or not, are there for the entertainment only and may never actually play the game they enjoy watching, even though they will definitely learn about it, perhaps even a great deal.

A recurring question in the literature on communities of practice that never seems to get a satisfactory answer concerns the motivation of the community members for sharing knowledge and contributing to the work of others they do not personally know and benefit nothing from (Correia et al., 2010). This appears to be a puzzle that has seen many different theories and approaches applied to it in search of explanation, yet ultimately all appear to come short of one. That may partially be, because a lot of the research is done with organizational management in mind, where the goal is either to find ways to stimulate individuals to cooperate rather than compete at the workplace, or develop some kind of knowledge management system that will facilitate that process, both of which should in theory be quite beneficial for the entity these people are employed in (Wang & Noe, 2010). Despite the significant variety of settings explored, this particular perspective by necessity frames the questions asked, and by extension the answers received, into one kind of cost versus benefit exchange of a given type of capital (for ex. social, structural, cognitive, relational, etc.) or another. It is perhaps no wonder then that most expectations of the scholars fail to materialize in practice, especially when it comes down to the fact that even the most active CoP members do not expect their efforts to be recognized, or reciprocated (Wasko & Faraj, 2005).

Social-semiotic spaces sidestep this issue somewhat by prescribing a framework that allows the participants to construct their own context, which governs the processes of knowledge sharing through the generators at the core of said spaces. In that sense, the meaning of every individual contribution can be seen as entirely local and unique, but that still does not explain one's motivation for doing it in the first place. The common endeavour aspect is left purposefully vague, while Gee cannot seem to escape the perceived need for, if not reciprocation, then at least recognition within the boundaries of the space, as seen in the "lots of different routes to status" affinity space feature. I did not initially put much thought in that direction, but all points to a certain void in this particular sphere of academic inquiry, long in need of some theoretical filling. And it is one that I suspect may have more to do with the aesthetic character of digital gaming (Kirkpatrick, 2011) rather than with the accumulation of any type of capital, social or otherwise. I will discuss said aesthetic approach in the very last chapter as it provides an intriguing point of view on the results of this research project as a whole.

3.1.2 Literacy for the new millennium

So there definitely seem to be processes of learning occurring within affinity spaces, but what exactly is their character? What are the types of knowledge that can in principle be acquired and/or developed through one's involvement in such a space? It would appear that these are quite a few indeed, but once again we run into issues of categorization and typology, as there are also quite a few possible ways to conceive of literacy, while at the same time one can observe a lot of overlap between the notions proposed by various scholars.

One such example of a carefully devised concept, despite its somewhat unimaginative name is "new literacies". According to Colin Lankshear and Michele Knobel, new literacies are those that combine the use of digital technology with practices that are representative of what they call new "ethos stuff" (Lankshear & Knobel, 2007). Said new ethos stuff stands for literacies that are participatory, distributed and collaborative in nature, and are governed by rules and norms more fluid than what their conventional counterparts tend to subscribe to (Lankshear & Knobel, 2007). The authors see these as being developed in people who exemplify a new mindset in terms of how they view value and expertise, space and social relations, or other people and mankind as a whole (see Figure 2). It is a perspective narrowly related to recognizing the crucial role of worldviews as posited by Aerts et al. (1994), albeit restricted to the workings characteristic of the social realm.

Among the new literacies the two include video gaming, fan fiction writing, weblogging, utilizing ICT to participate in affinity activities, and others. The practices of mass self-communication discussed earlier can be said to be steeped precisely in this new post-industrial mindset and so are in general all types of online affinity spaces.

Mindset 1	Mindset 2
The world basically operates on physical/ material and industrial principles and logics. The world is "centered" and hierarchical.	The world increasingly operates on non-material (e.g., cyberspatial) and post-industrial principles and logics. The world is "decentered" and "flat."
• Value is a function of scarcity • Production is based on an "industrial" model • Products are material artifacts and commodities • Production is based on infrastructure and production units and centers (e.g., a firm or company) • Tools are mainly production tools • The individual person is the unit of production, competence, intelligence • Expertise and authority are "located" in individuals and institutions • Space is enclosed and purpose specific • Social relations of "bookspace" prevail; a stable "textual order"	• Value is a function of dispersion • A "post-industrial" view of production • Products as enabling services • A focus on leverage and non-finite participation • Tools are increasingly tools of media-tion and relationship technologies • The focus is increasingly on "collectives" as the unit of production, competence, intelligence • Expertise and authority are distributed and collective; hybrid experts • Space is open, continuous and fluid • Social relations of emerging "digital media space" are increasingly visible; texts in change

Figure 2: The old and new mindsets, according to Lankshear and Knobel (2007).

Building onto this approach, Steinkuehler et al. take the concept of new literacies further and discuss other potential metaphors for it – what literacy is and what it could be, as proposed by a selection of research articles on the topic. Their suggestions include literacy as a tool, evoked by the analysis of the production of online fan fiction; literacy as a (virtual) place, as seen in the exploration of distributed cognition and social semiotic practices in massive multiplayer online games; and even literacy as a way of being through the play of modern single-player video games (Steinkuehler et al., 2005). In the same vein of thought Rebecca Black finds the construction of space in the case of the aforementioned sites of fan fiction production of particular interest. She applies Gee's affinity space approach to investigate the discursive construction and maintenance of online fan communities and stresses the importance of language and discourse in the establishment and transformation of social spaces (Black, 2007). Like many other scholars, she recommends further research into informal learning practices and affinity spaces and concludes that "new media, ICTs, and mindsets afford opportunities to expand classroom learning beyond the boundaries of the school walls into other personal, professional, and academic domains in ways that will facilitate

student knowledge of multiple modes of meaning making, access, participation, affiliation, learning, and success in a globalized, networked society" (p. 395, Black, 2007).

Elaborating further on the question of how fan communities work as affinity spaces, Black and Steinkuehler reflect on the diminished role the age of the participants has in such environments, as expertise is frequently displayed by the younger members of the community, who often have more in-depth experience with a given content or practice than their older colleagues and as such are able to provide much more useful feedback when that is necessary (Black & Steinkuehler, 2009). As in this particular case the activities in the affinity space centre on writing and critical evaluation (the research is conducted at a fan fiction portal), through their collaborative efforts the participants display visible improvements over time in composition, revision and editing and are largely able to develop the metavocabulary that is characteristic of professional writing (Black & Steinkuehler, 2009). The authors gradually attempt to drive through the point that the lack of reciprocity in the construction of orthodox study spaces such as the traditional school organizations and their class conduct tends to hurt the overall learning process, as the students are unable to contribute their knowledge and expertise in the way they would do in their affinity spaces of choice.

The need for expanding to more open and collaborative practices and the benefits from doing so is also the theme of much of Henry Jenkins' work on participatory and convergence culture. By participatory culture he means one that has relatively low barriers to personal expression and engagement; provides support for creative activity and encourages the sharing of creations with others; involves certain informal mentorship between experts and novices in a field; and has members who are convince that their contributions matter and who feel a degree of social connection among themselves (Jenkins, 2009). Meanwhile the notion of media convergence is used to basically signify the space where old and new kinds of media meet and get entangled together and how their consumption has been redefined by newly formed knowledge communities (Jenkins, 2009). Beyond that he attempts to define the necessary skills one needs in order to make use of this state of affairs and participate successfully. More specifically Jenkins (2009, p. xiv) describes the following abilities, or as he also terms them – new media literacies:

Play: The capacity to experiment with the surroundings as a form of problem solving.

Performance: The ability to adopt alternative identities for the purpose of improvisation and discovery.

Simulation: The ability to interpret and construct dynamic models of real-world processes.

Appropriation: The ability to meaningfully sample and remix media content.

Multitasking: The ability to scan the environment and shift focus onto salient details.

Distributed cognition: The ability to interact meaningfully with tools that expand mental capacities.

Collective intelligence: The ability to pool knowledge and compare notes with others toward a common goal.

Judgment: The ability to evaluate the reliability and credibility of different information sources.

Transmedia navigation: The ability to follow the flow of stories and information across multiple modalities.

Networking: The ability to search for, synthesize, and disseminate information.

Negotiation: The ability to travel across diverse communities, discerning and respecting multiple perspectives, and grasping and following alternative norms.

If most of these sound familiar already that should not be surprising – Jenkins features the concept of affinity spaces front and central in his report and has weaved it throughout his analysis as a form of participatory culture he calls "affiliation" (p. xi). The author further claims that culturing skills such as these will contribute to the development of a critical and engaged participatory civil society that will thrive on lifelong learning, and will employ collective intelligence to evaluate and disseminate information and organize effectively (Jenkins, 2009).

Naturally, the rise in numbers of people affiliated with affinity spaces in recent years has enabled a vast supply of tools necessary to facilitate their functioning in one way or another, resulting in the emergence of hybrids of tool and community (Shirky, 2008). A good and well-known example of this would be the variety of wikis that followed in the success of the original Wikipedia format. While mainly aimed at supporting collaboration these tools also allow for moderating the participation and extricating the harmful elements from the practices of the affinity space, as any information recognized as false or malicious in intent is swiftly contested and/or removed. Due to its nature all information in an affinity space is in a constant state of review.

Of course there are other ways of thinking about what constitutes literacy depending on what areas one sees as substantiating the reality of contemporary life the most. For example, an international research project on the "Assessment and Teaching of 21st Century Skills" came up with four key categories – ways of thinking; ways of working; tools for working; and skills for living in the world (Suto, 2013), across which they assigned the entire spectrum of skills deemed necessary – creativity, critical thinking, problem solving, decision-making, communication, collaboration, social and individual responsibility, citizenship, metacognition, information and ICT literacy. Nevertheless, the overlap between the conclusions of the various scholars is obvious and the outcome clear – it might be vital to for modern society to adopt these ways of thinking sooner rather than later. It is indeed telling that less than a decade after most of these analyses and recommendations were

originally made, a global political crisis is afoot, made possible precisely by the widespread lack of many of these skills among large segments of the population of the so-called first world (Inglehart & Norris, 2016).

3.1.3 Main principles of the ecological theory of knowing

Affinity spaces also evoke another type of approaches within the larger field of situativity theory, namely the ecological perspective to literacy and learning, which includes a number of distinct yet interrelated perspectives that happen to share certain underlying assumptions and principles. The latter are mostly focused on evaluating intelligence and creativity in situ, (i.e. those are seen as a function of the person being embedded within their surrounding context) rather than as a feature of the individual alone (Barab & Plucker, 2002). Among these one can count ecological psychology, situated cognition, distributed cognition, activity theory, and legitimate peripheral participation, but I have found the "ecological theory of knowing" (Barab & Roth, 2006) to be especially relevant to the video game streaming context.

Said theory is based around three main concepts: affordance networks, effectivity sets, and life worlds. The first construct stands for "the collection of facts, concepts, tools, methods, practices, agendas, commitments, and even people, taken with respect to an individual, that are distributed across time and space and are viewed as necessary for the satisfaction of particular goal sets" (p.5, Barab & Roth, 2006). This definition emphasizes the complex and distributed nature of the learning process and is centred on evaluating what are the possibilities of action for someone, i.e. the available affordances. Such networks can in principle extend infinitely until they satisfy the sought after outcome, meaning they have an intentional character and are bound only by their function – it is their capacity to address a goal or an issue that gives value to the elements included in the network (Barab & Roth, 2006). Or to illustrate this with a typical role-playing game scenario, a given concept (elemental resistance or damage buff), fact (demons have high fire resistance), tool (an item that buffs a sword to do ice damage), and participant (a player who fights demons in a certain area) are parts of an affordance network to the extent that they are productive for the respective user's intention (learn how to defeat a difficult demon boss).

Meanwhile, the effectivity set of an individual is their capacity to realize the potential of affordance networks – the collection of behaviours and practices they can muster in order to utilize the available affordances, extend the network further, or even generate an affordance network

themselves (Barab & Roth, 2006). It follows from this that only people with specific effectivity sets can perceive and interact with certain networks (something I will come back to later when discussing dispositions) and/or are more likely to put yet other networks to use when compared to people with different effectivity sets, i.e. it is largely an issue of attunement between the two, which means that said sets can only be interpreted in relation to a given affordance network (Barab & Roth, 2006). For example, if a player has never played with a controller before, and is only used to input commands through keyboard and mouse, they will have hard time utilizing the potential of anything learned about any game that requires the use of such a controller, as executing any given plan in practice requires skills they do not yet have.

The third concept, a life-world, is the environment as seen through the perception of the individual. Ultimately, if an element is to be included in the affordance network or not, depends not only on whether a person can make use of them, but also on whether they recognize those as able to generate value for their purposes at all, or to put it in another way – what is it that an individual is actually conscious of (Barab & Roth, 2006). A professional programmer or a game designer will understand a video game very differently than your average consumer; much like a plumber will understand a kitchen very differently compared to a cook. While the environment may be materially identical, the respective life-worlds of those perceiving it are everything but, so depending on a person's social role, their field of practice, previous experience, and so on, different aspects of the environment come together to form a functional whole.

When taken together, the affordance network and the effectivity set of an individual as reflected through their life-world and engaged with the purpose of achieving a given goal, represent an "intentionally bound system" (Barab & Roth, 2006). Knowing in terms of ecological theory then is precisely the process of engaging said system with a particular outcome in mind and being successful at it. By extension, learning in general should be such that it enables further possibilities for acting within and upon the world, and through appropriate participation in the available ecosystems one should be able to expand their life-world accordingly. Once an effectivity set is rich enough, an individual can apply it to a variety of affordance networks and further increase their capacities by discovering new ways to utilize already existing knowledge. And by recognizing the similarities in the underlying structures of otherwise contextually different affordance networks, one can successfully transfer their own abilities across contexts as well (Barab & Roth, 2006). Thus, developing systems thinking in the context a virtual world for example, allows for incorporating the same effectivity set in studying any kind of a system as long as the life-world of the person is expansive enough for them to be conscious of the necessary affordances.

As this project is focused on learning processes that take place within and around play and video games, it is important to examine how play relates to learning in the first place, as that is a relationship both complicated and fundamental (Thomas & Brown, 2007). A lot of the new literacies listed earlier require one to be able to discern subjects and problems from different perspectives, follow flows across different modalities, recognize underlying patterns in different information sources, adopt different identities, etc. "Multiple" and "different" occur over and over and that is not an accident – the age of the narrow specialist is long gone replaced by the acute need for interdisciplinary approach in all but a few instances. Serious issues nowadays are recognized to be systemic, complex, interrelated and global in character, and require people to be able to share and understand each other's fields of expertise, analytic approaches and worldviews, lest the path to eventual solutions ends up too twisted and winding to be of any practical use (Newell, 2001).

Video game players intuitively understand multiple perspectives as existence in virtual worlds is always multiple as for each avatar there exists both a player and a character (Thomas & Brown, 2007). When a "Let's Play" experience of a game that one has already played is considered this multiplicity is complicated by a yet another degree, as the viewer inevitably compares the narrative from their playthrough with the one that is occurring before their eyes, and merges the affordances of their character build with the one of the streamer. This type of learning is known as collateral learning – occurring in relation to the game itself, beyond what is internal to the actual gameplay, and in the real world is often employed to teach people from radically different cultural backgrounds to be able to appreciate and internalize seemingly conflicting and incompatible ideas (Thomas & Brown, 2007).

The "Souls" games discussed in the following chapters reward handsomely those who manage to develop precise knowledge and understanding of the digital clockwork that ticks behind the scenes, but in making that task so difficult to achieve they also teach the player how to research and utilize resources outside the virtual world itself (Bertozzi, 2014). It is well known that highly challenging game environments both necessitate and facilitate the creative impulses and process of those playing in them (Jackson et al., 2012). The player needs to be able to think their way through labyrinthine scenarios, take into account numerous interlocking elements, and lay out carefully thought out plans based on their observations, all of which requires a lot of effort, so perhaps the most important feature that a game needs to have is to make these players want to put in that effort in the first place (Gee, 2003). Indeed, as Thomas and Brown write, play is a disposition towards life – a way of reasoning about the world that surrounds us that allows us to find our place in it (Thomas & Brown, 2007). Research – scientific and otherwise – is also such a disposition, with researchers

frequently observed to exhibit traits such as "a tendency to innovate, to seek understanding, to share new insights or new ideas" (Van der Rijst et al., 2009). Needless to say, the two can and do overlap and it is precisely in cases like with the "Souls" games where the two seem able to combine seamlessly and reinforce each other – leisure begets hard work, and hard work begets leisure.

Once the right disposition is in place the player is motivated to learn and to seek additional paths to understanding a problem or completing a task. In the contemporary Internet context this almost always enrols them in an affinity space and fosters productive interactions with various online communities that have emerged around the generator in question. As with any pursuit of information one also needs to be able to evaluate what they find critically and, especially in the case of games like Dark Souls, a complete novice will have trouble finding their way through what is available and deciding what they need specifically. It is here where the enculturation in an affinity space allows them to acquire the ability to weigh information accordingly and to avoid "randomly trying anything and everything until something haphazard sticks" as Michael Thomsen complained earlier. As the game-generator results in new affordances for the players to recognize and utilize, they develop practices, which upon their consecutive engagement with an affinity space are transformed into novel practices unique to that affinity space. In this way learning is evoked through the creation of an altogether new knowledge and applications for it. As external grammar modifies the internal one as a part of the persistent change that characterizes video games, virtual worlds and other IT artefacts, the information structures within the respective affinity space do not stand still either, and new – where more effective in general, where context-specific – ways to deal with a given situation or an issue get enabled by the collective effort. In Dark Souls for example, boss encounters strategies evolve significantly over time as players experiment with different character builds, discover new important items, gain insight in how certain events will affect availability of help at a later point, etc.

Related to that, along the lines of the situated cognition principles which underpin the theory of affinity spaces, for one to acquire the necessary personal expertise in an affinity space is useful to prioritise knowing instead of knowledge (Thomas & Brown, 2009), somewhat similar to the overall tendency brought upon by the widespread use of search engines (Knight, 2014). Knowledge as such tends to be first and foremost associated with concrete facts and as mentioned above these can change, or a change in the context within which those facts play a role might morph significantly. Knowing then is determined through the interactions between the individual and their environment. Thus in affinity spaces it is often more important to know where to look for knowledge ("Is this the video that will show me how to get to the boss fight without exhausting half my resources getting

there?"), or whom to ask ("A. argues for the use of sorcery in the game, they should have an idea how to develop my character to survive close range combat better"), than simply being aware of a set of facts ("There are a dozen enemies between the boss and the closest bonfire." "My sorcerer cannot withstand more than a couple melee attacks."). As long as those who encounter new facts participate in the affinity space and want to share their discoveries, the entire community network has access to these, yet reviewing the information in light of personal experience and applying it to suit one's own purposes is an individual skill that can be developed. Or as Barab & Roth have put it "Actually *knowing* a network means understanding not only the elements of the network but also the contexts and intentions in terms of which the various elements make sense" (p.6, Barab & Roth, 2006).

3.2 Discussion: "Let's Play" YouTube channels as social-semiotic and affinity spaces

To summarize, the function of social semiotic spaces in learning, of which online affinity spaces form a subtype, is to provide individuals with a virtual location where to commune with those who share in their personal interests. Through these interactions they develop various literacies, skills, and advance their knowing process. In doing so the space largely functions like a collective intelligence and is able to solve a wide range of problems despite that the need for such solutions is not a pre-existing condition for the establishment of such communities. In the context of video game streaming specifically, the assembly of proactive viewers with various proficiencies and approaches to the game-generator serves to augment the "Let's Play" playthrough central to the space, and the proceedings which give rise to the interactions that underpin it. This is reflected both in the playthrough itself and the learning experiences of the individual users. As every "Let's Play" channel has a very different personality at its core (and particularly differing performances in respect to the chosen game that they are compared across) they naturally aggregate very different audience which should be observed both in terms of the information exchanged within the space and upon face to face interaction with individual participants.

Clearly there are a number of unique traits that distinguish video game streaming channels from other online affinity spaces such as game wiki pages or portals, so here I will take some time to situate them precisely as such and how they fit the more general concept of a social-semiotic space, while further reflecting in brief on the differences and exceptions at hand. Unlike the majority of SSS that exist online, when considered as such "Let's Play" YouTube channels may include numerous

generators as every playthrough draws on the semiotic sign content and the internal grammar of a different game. The unifying factor across all these LPs is the streamer, whose online persona also functions as a generator of sorts – many develop long-term fans who would watch them play almost anything and still participate creatively in the activities of the affinity space, despite their lack of experience with the game in question. The vast majority of the rest of the participants however differ significantly between LPs. As previously discussed, the YouTube channel is itself a portal, when stripped of all participation and interactions within, albeit one among many as for any given game the portals include their physical copy (these days it is usually an online download page on services like Steam), their official strategy guides, etc. (Gee, 2004). So when taken as a whole a YouTube channel links with multiple generators and is able to host a variety of interactive internal-external grammar nodes within the infrastructure of a single SSS portal, meaning it should be defined not as a classic social-semiotic space, but rather as a SSS hub or a cluster.

Now let us go through the eleven main characteristics specific of affinity spaces. The first – *a common endeavour that factors in above everything else* – is obviously accounted for, though like before we are talking about a cluster of interests and not a sole one. Either way, neither variable of the participants' backgrounds is above their affinity as related to the LP, as except the few personal fans of the streamer everyone else is there, because of the LP's respective video game. Similarly, like in all most other affinity spaces, experts *and novices share the same space without any segregation* occurring between them. The third feature, whether *a portal can also be a strong generator*, while rare for affinity spaces in principle can actually be observed with some of the LPs. For ex. in one of the channels I worked at, some of the users made a custom mod[8] to the streamer's game (in this case XCOM 2), so that they (the viewers) can add themselves as squad members in the game itself, complete with fictional character biographies, unique audio recordings prepared for each member (the streamer went on to hire voluntary, yet professional, voice actors to make that possible), and so on.

The next aspect that is seen as defining for affinity spaces is *the potential of the external grammar to transform the internal one*. Whether this is the case for an LP channel depends largely on its popularity. Well-known streams do seem to be monitored by the developers of some games, especially those which receive early builds of the software with promotional purposes, but it is hard to say to what extent this particular type of feedback is being incorporated into future versions of the game. Do note however that within this particular context the internal grammar of the game-generator extends to the playthrough of that game, since it is through it that the generation process

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[8] See Appendix I.

operates within the affinity space. Thus all transformations applied to the playthrough are changes in the internal grammar of the affinity space.

The fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth features are each concerned with whether the affinity space encourages the development of a certain type of knowledge, with these being *intensive and extensive; individual and distributed; dispersed; and tacit knowledge* respectively. Like with all affinity space related to video games, the extent to which these will hold true for a YouTube channel depends on the game-generator. Not every title allows its users to mod the game, tweak its configuration, or create custom content and in competitive games doing things like that is illegal and can incur penalties on those who attempt them. The XCOM 2 example from earlier shows that both specialized and broad knowledge are strongly encouraged, while Dark Souls and its LPs emphasize individual and distributed knowledge. These, as well as dispersed knowledge, usually tend to be fostered by all games that involve mechanics, which have to do with lots of variables, numerical values, and calculation, where players attempt to achieve optimal character builds or strategies, as they include utilizing custom tools, external wiki pages and websites, different streams and LPs, and other sources of information or functionality. Finally, the use and respect of tacit knowledge is perhaps the most illustrative aspect of the "Souls" games and their LPs, since there is a lot about the execution of the plans players make within the game, or the ways they interact with its online systems that cannot be verbally or otherwise communicated. Exploring these knowledge flows will play a crucial methodological role in quantifying and categorizing the transactions that occur in the affinity spaces of YouTube channels.

As with all other affinity spaces, *there are multiple roads to participation* in a YouTube channel, both central and peripheral to its functioning – one can advise the streamer and submit information to them; debate game strategies with other viewers; moderate discussions and spoilers; utilize programming and design skills for various purposes; work on their own streaming content, etc. Unlike most other such spaces however, there are not *lots of different roads to status,* at least in the YouTube channels as such, mainly because status as such is rarely considered. Indeed people do develop many social connections and can have a well-recognized online identity, but I do not see any of them operating from a position of status where this recognition would matter. However if one is to extend the affinity space of the channel to include the LP channel owner's potential live streaming activities, which appear to become more and more widespread among those who may have initially began only with the production of uploaded episodes, certain users do attain the status as well as the accompanying responsibilities of "moderators" (basically those members who enforce the rules

of conduct as determined by the streamer and the rest of their community) for these streams' live chat functionality.

And last, but not least, *leadership is porous and leaders are resources.* LP channels in a sense have one recognized leader, who is the streamer, but they are indeed a resource for the other users and the same applies to all other expert players or individuals with specialized skills and knowledge of certain topics. The latter's input is valued, as can be witnessed by the number of "likes" a given comment receives, but is by no means seen as definitive as the content of popular comments is frequently contested or expanded upon by others. Furthermore, there is no hierarchy of any sort, nor are there any orders being issued, as unlike some other websites the YouTube platform is not really set in a way that facilitates the emergence of such structures and relationships, formal or otherwise.

All in all, "Let's Play" YouTube channels account for almost all of the features of affinity spaces as prescribed by Gee, and in some respects (their hub-like nature) even expand upon the basic functions of a social-semiotic space. Unlike the majority of other affinity spaces they also sport an entertainment functionality that certainly accounts for a significant amount of the views of the videos and the interactions between users, but this exists *in addition to*, rather than *instead of* some of the other layers. Some people will be playing the same game and participate because they want to augment or compare their personal skills and experiences, while others will want to make their own channel and want to learn the ropes, and yet others will be present only for the entertainment, or to evaluate a potential purchase. Nevertheless, the common endeavour does lie in the synergy between these two functionalities and the shared experience of the journey.

With the growth of every channel, a number of regular participants begins to appear, signifying the emergence of a fandom of sorts that accumulates and transfers knowledge across many "Let's Play" projects, that often feature completely unrelated by genre, or other similarities, games. It is also the case that some scholars believe that Gee's original affinity space definition, despite that it was created to avoid conceptual limitations in the first place, is limiting in itself. They have sought to expand it in order for it to be able to include a range of divergent activities and social interactions, which take place outside the common endeavour, as well as lose the assumption that one online affinity space equals just a single website or a discussion board. The argument goes that this will allow for the theory to account for the tendency of affinity spaces to change over time and in so doing serve to develop a situated model of the research topic in question (Bommarito, 2015). Nevertheless, for reasons that will be discussed shortly, I prefer to subscribe to Gee's notion of affinity space deterioration.

3.3 Summary

This chapter's focus was to acquaint the reader with a range of scientific approaches to learning as they were developed in their respective fields of academic literature. While by no means completely exhaustive I nevertheless consider the review was sufficient in setting up the context of this research and the various angles it was conceptualized through.

To summarize, as the main building block of my work one would find James Paul Gee's theory of affinity spaces, itself based on the approach of social semiotics (Gee, 2004). In his pursuit to comprehend the emergent cultures of certain online communities the scholar developed a set of eleven attributes, which serve to define what constitutes an affinity space. Later in the chapter I showed how I applied said attributes to understand YouTube channels as affinity spaces and why this particular approach is a functional and illuminating way of analyzing the processes of learning that take place within.

Speaking of learning processes, the chapter also dealt with presenting the multitude of new literacies that have been recognized as becoming essential for individual and social development over the course of the last few decades with the advent of the information society. Here I discussed the texts of Lankshear & Knobel (2007) and Jenkins (2009) and how their works were utilized by other authors like Steinkuehler (2005) and Black (2007) in their own research (Steinkuehler & Black, 2009) on affinity spaces and other topics concerning the intersection of new learning practices and video games (Halverson & Steinkuehler, 2016).

Finally, I explored the ecological theory of knowing as it was developed within the larger field of situativity theory, mostly through the literature contributions of Barab & Roth (2006) as well as other collaborations of Sasha Barab with various academics. In that part of the chapter I drew parallels between the ecological theory of knowing and the concepts of the affinity space approach, and also explained how play relates to learning, at least as discussed in the writings of Thomas & Brown (2007).

What all of the above approaches have in common is the understanding that the processes of learning, whether defined as literacies, or knowing, or capital accumulation cannot and should not be removed from the socio-cultural and socio-technical networked context they have originated in – the spaces and ecologies surrounding them. Across the entire literature reviewed one may find scientists striving for achieving an organic understanding of a complex, dynamically evolving matter, often through the application of interdisciplinary means.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

As its title suggests, this will be the chapter to provide an overview of the methodology involved in researching the questions stated in the introduction. Here I will define the theory that is utilized in my approach of choice in selecting the field sites and conducting the processes of data collection and analysis. But first to remind the reader the research questions:

1. Can there be observed a significant difference among different affinity spaces that have emerged around playthroughs of the same game, in terms of the knowledge shared therein? What about among the same affinity spaces, but with different generators?

2. What types of discourse are utilized in these affinity spaces and along what lines do they influence the content produced in the LP channels?

3. What are the factors that contribute to enabling potential learning outcomes in the design of the video game that is used for an LP and the performative behaviour of the player who is making it?

4.1 Sample selection process

In the process of selecting which specific YouTube channels were going to be used as the core research sites for this study, I was guided by several self-imposed requirements, chief among which was the wish to pack as much variety as possible in the optimal number of streams that my time constraints would potentially allow me to cover. Video game streaming is an extremely diverse activity at its heart and seems natural to attempt to reflect the multitude of people involved rather than composing the sample of homogenous subjects. In the discussion part of my literature review I explained at length why YouTube channels are not the stereotypical affinity spaces – they have a human personality in the heart of the whole video game streaming endeavour. It is precisely from those personalities that I wanted to accommodate as much variety as possible and thus attempt to represent albeit in a very miniscule way the rich diversity that lies behind video game streaming.

Furthermore, I aimed to include channels that have large enough viewer base to supply sufficient activity to evaluate, while not drowning me in what Gee and Hayes would consider as

deteriorated affinity space content, i.e. "sites devoted more to socialization or popularity" (Gee & Hayes, 2011), which does indeed seem to happen with YouTube spaces when they become too popular for their own good, where the channels seem to be visited by the majority of viewers as a matter of habit and mostly with the aim of socialization, be it with positive or negative accent. Therefore, my goal was to work with samples that would have a minimum of 30, but no more than 300 comments per episode. Since it turned out next to impossible to find streamers who have produced LPs of exactly the same games and fit the requirements for both reasonable popularity and accessibility (the latter simply meaning that their LPs and respective affinity spaces are conducted in English), I decided to employ a step by step approach structured as follows.

Initially I would focus only on the four selected Dark Souls LPs and perform basic data analysis of the comment section content. I would then have the one person standing out as peaking in terms of the knowledge transactions performed within their space to remain for the Resident Evil 7 LPs as well, and from that second group of four (since RE7 is a much newer game there should be more content overlap to be expected among those who streamed it), I would check which other LPs match across the streamers and collect data from playthroughs of two other titles – this is how I eventually picked Nioh and Deus Ex: Mankind Divided.

For the purposes of manageability the comments utilized in the data collection process cannot possibly cover the LPs in their entirety (for the more popular channels that would mean well over 10 000 comments per instance), so depending on the game in question a specific segment of the playthroughs is isolated and the comment sections of the respective episodes are processed. For Dark Souls, I went with the "Sen's Fortress" area, from the point of entering until the point where the player discovers the only bonfire in the level. This particular section happens to be midway through the game, not literally – it is not structured linearly after all, but in the sense that one needs to complete it in order to access the locations of the world meant for more advanced players. From this follows that it is also an area where all skills necessary to be mastered are put to the test – a midterm exam of sorts, while not that many brand new elements are introduced. The reason this is important has to do with the educated guess that the earlier a game is in its playthrough, the more knowledge-oriented transactions are to be expected, as opposed to the late parts of the LP. Thus, locating and focusing on the "middle ground" should prevent the results from being biased in either direction, or at least minimize any such bias.

In the case of Resident Evil 7, bar a short introductory section and an epilogue, the game features several distinct chapters of sorts at the end of which the player has to win a specific boss encounter, and within which they are more or less free to explore the environment, while certain

events still have to completed in a predetermined order, so that one is able to proceed ahead. With the same reasoning as before, my segment of choice for data collection here is the first hour of the second such chapter. Despite not having much in common with RE7, Deus Ex' structure actually functions in a similar way, albeit on a much grander scale. Again, introduction and epilogue notwithstanding, the game has four distinct chapters the opening hour of the third of which – Golem City – will comprise the source of comment data for analysis. As for Nioh, my decision is made easier due to the game mission-based structure. The data will come from the first mission that follows immediately after all main mechanics have been introduced and (supposedly) have become a part of the player's repertoire. The mission in question is called "Deep in the Shadows".

4.2 Operationalizing gaming literacy

Within the context of a social-semiotic space and affinity space theory gaming literacy is best described by Gee himself as "the extent to which someone is able to operate within the internal and external design grammars of the semiotic domain of video games, and is able to understand and create meanings within that domain" (Gee, 2003). Here, the overall distribution of gaming literacy across the audience is estimated through the frequency and complexity of knowledge transactions with helpful information submitted to the streamer by their viewers, which is defined by the context of their respective playthroughs as described in the third chapter. This is achieved by isolating a certain proportion of the LP content (meaning a full playthrough of a certain area within the game) and downloading all the comments on the episodes that contain the gameplay using Webometric Analyst 2.0. The so collected qualitative data is coded using mainly emergent codes and categories (Saldana, 2009) as per the principles of thematic content analysis to uncover the relevant patterns within the data (Green & Thorogood, 2004) and is then compared between the playthroughs of the different streamers.

Codes in qualitative research are words and/or short phrases that symbolically assign "a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data" (Saldana, 2009). They are not necessarily reductive as through those the researcher aims to summarize or condense the data available. While a given code may be assigned to a single unit of data, in more complex data sets codes are assigned to patterns that form naturally within qualitative data as it tends to reflect the repetitive structure of action and consequence characteristic of human affairs (Saldana, 2009). This is precisely the case with my project in particular, with the emergent

aspect referring to the fact that I did not approach the data with a pre-established coding system. Instead the codes emerge from the act of processing the data itself as "coding *is* analysis" (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Once the data has been processed and all the codes are set, a second pass at the already codified data allows for categories to emerge based on the discovery of underlying themes, which may be descriptive or conceptual in character, since "emergent categories might also evolve as conceptual processes rather than descriptive topics" (Saldana, 2009). The resulting analytical framework utilizing Comment Function Tags (CFTs) as main coding units is presented in Chapter Six, while the full records of the respective comment sections will be provided in Appendix II. Naturally, since the overall amount of comments fluctuates according to the popularity of the channel, the comparison focuses on percentages of helpful data, rather than the total number of relevant inputs.

4.3 Types of discourse and the role of epistemic activity

In what is essentially going to play the role of (among other things) a bridge between the thematic content analysis chapter before it, and the Discourse analysis part that is to follow after it, the data from the comment sections will be further reorganized by types of discourse. The purpose of this is manifold. First of all, it will allow me to explore the language-in-use found in those sections in more detail, since the opening research question is predominantly concerned with the overall distributions of knowledge transactions and their significance, but deals not with any implications of the specific CFT sub-types and/or the processes of meaning-making involved in their production. Furthermore, by doing this I will attempt to account for the potential integration of this work with literature produced through the investigations of other types of formal and informal online learning spaces, which naturally cannot be expected to utilize my emergent coding schemes and categories. And finally, in order to answer the second research question, this approach will enable me to define the venues along which the users of the space move to influence the content produced in the YouTube channel, thus covering one of the two main flows in the continuous loop of streamer-audience interaction. Where discourse(s) of knowledge dissemination and production are concerned the underlying steps, which comprise them will be classified according to epistemic activities (Arvaja, 2012), while all other data will be only interpreted as its respective discourse type.

4.4 Applying Discourse analysis to narrated gameplay and developing the "Let's Play Performance Profile"

For the third research question, J. P. Gee's Discourse analysis is adapted for the purposes of this part of the project to investigate the performance of the streamers and how they narrate their interactions within the game, while his principles of good learning in video games (Gee, 2007) are used to evaluate the gameplay content produced in the chosen segments. The theory of Discourses, as previously mentioned, has its roots in socio-linguistics and allows one to study the use of language in action, so that they can examine how people build significance, connections and relevance; enact activities, identities and relationships; and make claims to beliefs and knowledge (Gee, 1999). In this case my needs do not necessitate the implementation of this, or any other form of linguistic analysis in full, however its principles of processing and organizing language content around lines and idea units, stanzas, macro-lines and structures, are utilized to break down the narration and rebuild it in terms of uncovering its underlying function and meaning within the context of the LP. In essence, this produces a certain kind of "Let's Play Performance Profile" based on which one can theorize which performative approaches may maximize the learning potential of these types of affinity spaces, and which are likely to go the opposite way. Since, as previously mentioned, Discourse analysis tends to paint a rather detailed picture per situation, only one such situation, further divided into several scenes, will be selected from an LP episode that all streamers must have engaged in[9]. Said situation will be analyzed in both frames of reference, i.e. in-game and as an interaction with the viewers.

The first frame will be treated as an actual conversation between the player and the game as both processes – that of gameplay and spoken or written exchange – tend to follow the same structure of *probe* (a statement or a question) – *response – reflection – probe,* and as it is established our way of being in the world relies as much upon syntaxis and semantics as does the language proper (Gee, 2015). After all language is but a formalization of how we operate in, and think about the world. Video games are by their nature goal-driven pursuits and in that respect they very much resemble goal-driven conversations – a semblance, which is far from metaphorical when considered through the lenses of the ecological theory of knowing.

In order to accomplish a goal humans interpret the world in terms of affordances and utilize them through our effective abilities (see 3.1.3). For ex. the process of me talking to a friend to convince them to go see a movie this weekend, follows the same basic steps as the process of a player trying to get from point A to point B in the virtual world of Dark Souls in one piece. The game

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[9] There are no completely nonlinear games among the four used in this research, which means that will be specific "choke points" in the chosen LP episodes where all streamers will have to handle the same situation, and which should be reflected accordingly in their language-in-use.

has preferences about the way this traversal is to be done and the rules according to which its steps may be performed in much the same way my friend has preferences about the movie she would consider watching, while the times and the theater it is shown at define how it may happen, if at all. Indeed this is also the same type of conversation scientists have with the very real world when performing an experiment for example, albeit not formalized at the same level and hence it is no accident that we tend to speak of scientific *inquiry* when referring to research. By taking cues from ecological psychology one can structure the occurring interactions and interpret the process in parts and as a whole by applying Discourse analysis on the resulting conversation.

While this may sound overly abstract it is made decidedly less so in the context of "Let's Play" videos where the players verbalize both their probes and reflections throughout the said conversational process, which allows the analysis to be applied in its traditional fashion without adding any speculative elements to the methodology. The responses of the game software may not be in spoken or written language, but the visual recording of the interactions fully encompasses the ongoing conversation, verbal or otherwise.

The second frame where the player becomes a streamer speaking to their audience is more straightforward albeit – somewhat ironically – recorded to a lesser extent in terms of a digital artefact. Once again the comment sections of the YouTube channels will provide the source of data for that side of the conversation, and while one cannot access what every single viewer's response to every single moment of the playthrough was, the content of the comments as a whole will serve the role of a voice of sorts for the affinity space.

Any patterns that can be observed will be interpreted in terms of the affinity space theory and a case will be made to explain the relationships between the performances of the streamers and the behaviour and literacy practices of their respective audiences as evaluated in the preceding chapter. Some possible explanations here could be for example: a) the streamer's ability to deliver an immersive performance serves to bring in many experts on the game-generator to follow his playthrough and by utilizing their input he/she makes up for their own lack of critical or systems thinking skills, thus serving as a mediator between experts and novices; b) the streamer's tendency to be thorough and methodical in their exploration and observations, uncovers much knowledge their viewers would otherwise be unaware of, but lacks in entertainment value, which renders this affinity space for use by experts only who however can go in-depth in ; c) this streamer exhibits general lack of planning in their gameplay and interest in the lore of the game, and focuses on their personal identity building instead, which results in a predominantly entertainment oriented stream, and a stagnate literacy distribution; etc.

4.4.1 Validity in Discourse analysis

According to Gee (1999) there are four main that constitute validity for this methodology. These are first and foremost convergence – the more the answers to the questions about the six building tasks converge to support the analysis, that is the answers don't contradict each other, the more valid is the outcome; agreement, over the social languages in use by many native speakers, or when other researchers work agrees with the project's conclusions; coverage – when the manner in which the analysis is applied can be transferred to related data types; and linguistic details, when the analysis is more deeply embedded in the established functional details of linguistic structure.

As the focus here is not on the social languages and the cultural models the speakers (or commenters) use – for ex. the way a streamer uses English tells a lot about his or hers background, but I do not investigate how said background affects what they do in the game or in their channel. Rather I want to understand how the way they already played said game and how they acted in their channels has affected the behaviour of the users of these affinity spaces. Because of that there is very little emphasis put on linguistic details, and convergence is what should determine the validity of this analysis, since agreement and coverage are not immediately relevant to the research project, rather they can serve to evaluate it after the fact.

4.5 Data sources and instruments

There are only two sources of qualitative data, which inform the research process. The first consists of the "Let's Play" episodic video recordings, from which select segments are extracted and transcribed in full, both in terms of the streamer's narration and events in the gameplay responding to the player's actions. The second is comprised of the comments sections of the aforementioned LP episodes, the content of which serves as record of the users' activity within the affinity spaces of the selected YouTube channels. Since both of these sources are made publicly available as part of the users' respective agreements with Google (content creator and viewers alike), there are no ethical considerations related to their use for research purposes, which to cover in this chapter (Vitak et al., 2017).

CHAPTER FIVE: AFFINITY SPACE GENERATORS

The contents of the fifth chapter have to do with the games that will act as generators for the affinity spaces in question. I will use these pages not only to detail the design, narratives and mechanics of the chosen titles, but also to argument said choice and hypothesize on how this particular selection may play out in terms of aiding, or deteriorating the production of knowledge and the emergence of external grammar within a given affinity space. The games to be featured here are in order: Dark Souls, Resident Evil 7, Nioh, and Deus Ex: Mankind Divided.

5.1 Dark Souls

''Everything in the game has been painstakingly and deliberately implemented for good reason. It's all part of the plan. Once you can embrace that idea, Dark Souls (...) becomes a highly cerebral adventure that takes careful planning and execution to progress and survive''

Bakalar, Stein, & Ackerman, CNET

Clearly not all video games incorporate the infrastructure to support an LP that is to feature the type of content that can promote the emergence of an affinity space with learning experiences, which can be effectively explored and compared. An LP of Tetris for example is doubtful to inspire a moral dilemma or make someone reconsider their understanding of a given social model, even if it is performed by a Nobel laureate. Thus, following in some of the lessons learned from Minecraft (Karaivanov, 2011), I would hypothesize that for the purposes of this project one should focus on a title that utilizes either emergent gameplay (Charles et al., 2005), or emergent narrative (Louchart & Ayleth, 2004), as the more freedom the player has to engage with the environment and the story on their own terms, the better use they will make of their pre-established literacies. Ideally, the video game will present the player with a rich enough potential for interpretation of the proceedings, thus keeping any form of in-game exposition and tutorship to an absolute minimum. The aim is to maximize the "fill-in the blanks" aspect as this will emphasize the role of the player in the player-game configuration and also keep the experience as far from resembling other media formats as possible. However as Minecraft has been out for many years now, every single aspect of the game has been well documented and all there is to discuss about it has been covered (after purchasing the company developer of the game, as of last year Microsoft even includes tutorials for the console

versions). Thus I had to find another title corresponding to the qualities listed above, which I believe I have in the face of the first entry of the Dark Souls series by From Software. Why that is the case I think will become readily apparent from the next few pages.

The games from the so-called "Souls" series (which so far include three Dark Souls titles, their predecessor Demon's Souls and a spin-off of sorts called Bloodborne) are often referred to in the industry media as being in a genre of their own (Rougeau, 2017). These are semi-open world hybrids of action gaming and role-playing, where the player constructs and views their avatar in third person and then sets off to explore some extremely dangerous lands where every single thing seems bent on killing them (the original game's promotional tagline "Prepare to Die" is a minor stroke of marketing genius in that respect). The world is designed with mostly European medieval aesthetics intertwined with dark, veering on horror, fantasy sensibilities that are often inspired by Japanese and European classical art pieces (Martin, 2016) in order to create a very unsettling feeling in those exploring it.

The player cannot technically speaking lose the game, but progression is made very difficult as each time they are defeated in combat with the world's various occupants, or fall prey to a trap or treacherous terrain, they are returned back to the last save point they have used (known as bonfires, these also facilitate a number of other functions in the game), while all said occupants respawn[10] and need to be put down yet again if one wants to attempt traversing to the location they died. The latter is usually necessary as upon dying one looses all the "souls" they have accumulated and have a single chance of recovering those if they make it back there without getting killed. These "souls" double as both experience points (i.e. what is needed to increase the character's "stats" – their quantified skills and abilities, which make them stronger, faster, more resilient, etc.) and currency within the game's world – the only way to purchase items and equipment that can serve a great variety of purposes. Thus, the player is always tempted to reach the next bonfire, but risk dying and potentially losing everything achieved on one hand, and preserve their "souls" and return safely to the previous one, but then having to battle their way through again on the other.

Beyond some concise explanations on how to control their character early on, and a very vague quest defining their principal objective ("ring the two bells of awakening", "find those who have left their thrones", etc.), the player is given no directions whatsoever on how to play, where to go, or how any of the game's complex mechanics even work. Apart of a suitably cryptic introductory cinematic, "Souls" features no exposition and the few NPCs[11] that can be interacted with talk in an

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[10] This means they will reappear unharmed at their original locations.
[11] The acronym stands for Non Player Character.

obscure or borderline insane manner, which only hints at events and ideas without actually revealing anything. The game also omits on purpose certain features usually considered standard for video games of similar cloth, namely a map and a "pause" button. The first removes any abstract way of orienting oneself so that all players have to build a mental representation of a world of gargantuan proportions (the full games[12] tend to take anywhere between seventy and a hundred hours to complete) at a literally inch by inch resolution as the locations of items, traps, enemies, secrets, etc. are packed together very densely. The second design decision removes the option to pause the game in case anything unexpected surprises or scares the player and throws them off balance (usually resulting in imminent death and loss of progress), which tends to happen every couple of minutes during a first attempt at exploration of a given area and so one can never safely regain their composure – they must always be on their guard. Finally the combat is designed in such a way that even the most basic enemies can relatively easily kill a character late in the game, if the player is not careful or confuses/forgets their attack patterns (role-playing games by definition allow for very powerful character builds to be developed over time that can normally overpower anything in the early content with ease).

It goes without saying at this point that Dark Souls is a very, very difficult game. So much so in fact that some have questioned the meaningfulness of attempting to tackle this kind of material in the first place (Thomsen, 2012), while others assert that the game has granted them the best gaming experience of their lives (Houghton, 2015). What I find particularly interesting here is how the authors attempt to justify their respective points of view, as they both evoke learning in their argument. Consider the differences between the following two quotes:

"Dark Souls takes so long to play because it refuses to tell you it's basic ground rules, then kills you over and over again for failing to understand them. As a player, you proceed not by thinking through problems but by randomly trying anything and everything until something haphazard sticks. The game is teaching you, but it's not teaching you anything worth knowing."

(Thomsen, 2012)

"And then you fight back to the point where you fell, mandatorily clinging to every scrap of knowledge you garnered the first time (...) with so much on the line, and so little overt assistance given, Dark Souls forces you into a mentality of pure, true learning. (...) This is learning as you do in the real world, fuelled by personal experience, by trial and error, and accelerated by curiosity and the desire to understand and master."

(Houghton, 2015)

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[12] Each title usually gets additional downloadable content (DLC) at some point after release, which extends the overall length of the game further.

Which one is correct? I would argue that Thomsen makes some very obvious mistakes in his statement. First of all, the need to deduce said "ground rules" without having them explicitly defined for you a priori, is indeed very similar to how learning occurs in the real world, if not in video games in general. Much like in science, the real issue lies not in solving a problem given to you, but in figuring out what the problem is in the first place – asking the right question is the only way to finding the right answer. If your response is to randomly try anything until something works, instead of building upon what has been learned from failed attempts, then there is no learning to speak of. The other mistake is that whether something is worth knowing or not, depends entirely on the context in which it exists and the meaning attached to it. Value is likely the single most subjective concept possible – it does not exist in nature by itself, even if one subscribes to the realism school of philosophy.

However we are not here to debate whether Dark Souls is worth playing in principle or not, but to explore how it works as an affinity space generator once people engage with it anyway, as the game's difficulty is not just an end into itself, but tends to serve a profoundly constructive purpose. As Elena Bertozzi writes "it is virtually impossible to make progress in the game without help. Players have to do research on the Internet, consult with expert players, and be willing to undergo many hours of trial-and-error practice in order to be able to move forward" (Bertozzi, 2014). I would argue though that this is not necessarily true as it is my personal observation that many players seem to purposefully refuse assistance and avoid spoilers as much as they can, so completing a "Souls" game is by no means "virtually impossible" on your own. Nevertheless, the majority of people do prefer to collaborate with each other and they are able do so both through the game's internal mechanisms and externally, by participating in online affinity spaces.

Said internal mechanisms are, like many other aspects of these games, somewhat unusual in their design and implementation. Upon entering the game, the player has to make a choice whether they want to play online or offline (this can be done at any time when loading the game, not only on the very first occasion). If they choose to go online, their game world is revealed to be partially overlapping with the worlds of all other players, which adds a whole new set of mechanics to those listed above. Occasionally, players may see white "ghosts" of others who happen to be currently playing in their immediate vicinity; the ground may have bloodstains, which can be "activated" in order to see what happened to the person who died at that spot (as much as one can deduce from their movements and position at least); also players can leave messages on the ground using a certain item, which can only be entered through the game's specifically prepared vocabulary of words and phrases, thus guaranteeing that the atmosphere of the game will not be affected, and

that communication is not too explicit (for ex. one can easily hint at a trap, but not say what exactly that trap is). Finally, and perhaps most importantly, at locations where boss encounters take place – particularly difficult scenarios where players must defeat an enemy much stronger than themselves – one can now leave a sign that allows others to "summon" them to help during these encounters and the other way around. This will make the bosses stronger, but at least one will not be alone in facing them. There also exists a complex system of so-called "covenants" – in-game organizations, all steeped in the game's lore, often quite hard to find, joining most of which (re)defines the rules of engagement with other players: whose game world one can invade and under what conditions (and in doing so make their game even more difficult), how to receive or provide help against such invasions, what rewards one can obtain from doing either of those, and so on.

While it bears no direct effect on the gameplay as such, the way in which the lore and overarching storyline of the series is communicated to those playing them has also done a lot to foster constructive and creative collaborations from the fan community. It is a time where television shows and cinema productions frequently struggle to deliver a novel or surprising take on the stories they tell, as the collective intelligences of their fandoms work incessantly to predict all the possible narrative paths and unravel all their constituent parts (Gürsimsek & Drotner, 2014). But instead of delivering endless twists in an attempt to keep the plot relevant, or something along those lines, the lore of the "Souls" games, which undoubtedly can fill a book with many hundreds of pages, has been deliberately withheld from the players, as if the they have been handed over only the notes and references to that book. In order to comprehend the mythology of the world that surrounds them, or even the rationale of their immediate actions, the players need to keep collecting and splicing together tiny snippets of information from item and entity descriptions, and constantly think about the context in which something is found and how that may provide clues to the larger picture. It seems to take months before the global community is able to piece together even one more or less complete narrative as many of its elements are always left open to interpretation.

Clearly in a world defined by so many complicated and interwoven systems combined with the intentionally obscured and/or sparse in-game information both in terms of mechanics and lore, there is ample space for both emergent gameplay within the game and emergent narrative within the player's mind and consecutive LP performance, which makes it a next to ideal candidate for my purposes. Plus, in order for me to collect sufficient amounts of data to test my hypothesis, I needed a relatively popular game with a large enough player and by extension – viewer base, all conditions that Dark Souls easily meets.

Finally, the aforementioned lack of clarity tends to merge with the high-risk situations and the unforgiving treatment of mistakes, as to "engender a Foucauldian response" of sorts by means of enabling a moral normalization processes in the players (Van Nuenen, 2015). This is because many players seem unable to agree on how specific aspects of the game should actually be played out, that often has to do with never-ending debates on what is "fair" to do against other people, and perhaps even more interestingly, against the game itself. For a variety of reasons, "Souls" players frequently feel the need to commit to certain codes of honour that may extend to surprising lengths. Do you bow to others before initiating a duel and do you wait for them to return the gesture? Do you heal yourself against invaders who are unable to do so because of "covenant" alignment, even though it was their choice to attack you in the first place? Do you make use of affordances in the environment as to confuse the enemy AI and get a "cheap" victory? Especially in the context of a "Let's Play" where the streamer is also supposed to make things interesting for the viewers the pressure to honour the challenge and not to exploit opportunities is quite palpable, yet for many the very principle of Dark Souls appears to be that you are forced to use anything and everything in order to survive and all should be "fair game". In the literature the presence of similar developments is referred to as "expansive gameplay" (Parker, 2008), which is observed in many titles that support emergent gameplay, where players themselves create events and experiences within the game's world, without having any explicit reasons for doing so, as far as the game itself is concerned.

In the case of Dark Souls however, this flexibility of interpretation for rules, mechanics and principles (especially since it often seems to engage people's deeply internalized cultural and moral values) allows not only for the emergence of expansive gameplay, but one that is characterised by multiple, highly-contested, points of difference, as well as a variety of recurring issues within the context of the affinity spaces associated with it, which in turn affect the social, creative and learning processes that take place within them and as such should be analyzed accordingly.

5.2 Resident Evil 7 (RE7)

If due to its design particularities Dark Souls can be said to represent a nearly ideal affinity space generator, what would hypothetically lie at the other end of the spectrum? What type of content would attract the kind of audience that has little to none intent to invest in productive participation? In going through the seemingly endless list of popular titles released over the last few years, my attention was grabbed by the sudden proliferation of relatively cheaply made indie horror

games, which seems to have begun with Five Nights at Freddy's (FNF) in 2014. The low development cost of the products easily explains why these are churned out so quickly – the aforementioned game has spawned four sequels in less than 2 years – but what exactly is making them so popular (the franchise has sold between 2 and 2.5 million copies to date[13]) is not as immediately apparent, as the game's mechanics appeared to be focused strictly on delivering "jump scares" to the player.

It turns out that by streamlining the game's functionality and isolating the jolts of sudden adrenaline delivery as its main attraction, whether knowingly or not, FNFs author Scott Cawthon has made a bona fide hit for the streaming era of digital entertainment. Apparently, watching others get scared on camera is entertaining enough on its own to the point where any other mechanics may fall by the road, with the traditionally complex nature of a video game streaming being largely conflated to that of a peculiar reality TV show. This is not to say that titles like this should be seen as occupying some kind of lowbrow niche in terms of artistic value, but rather that by reducing the LP output to a sequence of reactions, the audience involvement and feedback is also reduced to such a sequence. In that sense, FNF LPs seem to have more in common with the various (and similarly popular) "X React to Y" YouTube video series[14] than the LP of a more fleshed out gaming experience.

Having singled out the horror genre as the one most likely to provide candidates for affinity space "degenerators", I nevertheless wanted to evaluate a title that incorporates a more elaborate suite of ludic activities, as bringing in a Five Nights at Freddy's LP would do little beyond confirming the obvious. Thus, as a counterpoint to Dark Souls, I decided to include the most recent chapter in the long running horror game (and for a while now also a movie) series "Resident Evil", where the inevitable jump scares seem to be fitted within a package requiring careful exploration, planning, precision, puzzle solving, etc. The idea is of course that in theory such a game should give plenty to the streamer to do beyond grimacing at the camera, while potentially providing their audience with a lot more agency beyond describing their reactions to said grimaces.

Resident Evil is yet another Japanese franchise (known in its country of origin as Biohazard), this time developed and published by the much larger Capcom Co., Ltd. The original game from 1996 is considered to have singlehandedly invented the "survival horror" genre, but over the course of many sequels and spin-offs released through the years, it has become a metaphorical boiling pot of

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[13] Source: http://steamspy.com/dev/Scott+Cawthon

[14] The format of these basically confronts preselected audiences with an object or an experience they are deemed stereotypically incompatible with. For ex. "elders react to gangsta rap" or "kids react to walkmens", etc. In all cases the sought after effect is entertainment for the viewers derived from the strong emotions of confusion / surprise / disgust and so forth in the audience that result from said encounter. Similarly, the FNF games and others like them, seek to entertain the viewers mostly by "jump-scaring" the streamer. Needless to say a webcam is required for such LPs.

design approaches, aesthetic choices, and game mechanics, with varying levels of success in their implementation. This seventh entry in the main series is said to be going back to the basics in many respects, while applying what worked in competing titles and utilizing an unusual for the Resident Evil games first person perspective. Upon its launch in early 2017, the game has debuted to the positive reception of critics and fans alike and has also become a choice title for one of the YouTube streamers that I had already approached for their Dark Souls LP, giving me the welcome opportunity to conduct a straightforward comparison within the boundaries of a single channel.

As mentioned earlier, the various Resident Evil games utilize many different aesthetics, with the latest instalment opting for a particularly grimy, grindhouse cinema feel, and set up against the backdrop of a rundown mansion located somewhere among the swamps in the state of Louisiana. While the overarching plot of the series concerns the struggles of a fairly large cast of Special Forces operatives, police officers, and secret agents against the innumerable wrongdoings of the nefarious "Umbrella Corporation" and their "zombie apocalypse"-capable biological weapon – the "T-virus" all across the globe, that eclectic, overwritten narrative takes a backseat for this chapter, which instead focuses on a rather personal story in a more confined setting.

As the protagonist Ethan, the player needs to navigate the plantation and its surroundings, and basically play cat and mouse with several seemingly immortal, formerly human – now corrupted by the T-virus – enemies, in the face of the Baker family who used to own the place. The narrative of the game is revealed slowly through cutscenes and documents scattered around the property, as well as certain VHS tapes left from previous visitors, which the player actually gets to play through instead of just watching. Apart of the story bits, the latter also give some important clues to how to solve certain puzzles and progress further. The ultimate goal is to find and save Ethan's wife Mia, who may or may not be an innocent victim of the Bakers, find the reason for the infection, and eventually eliminate its source.

Initially trapped and barehanded, the player's character gradually gets access to more and more rooms in the house(s) and locations nearby, and can make use of an increasing array of tools and weapons, the accumulation of which tends to morph the focus on stealth gameplay early on into more aggressive action sequences in the later half. Nevertheless, ammunition for the weapons is scarce and the same goes for all other resources, so the careful scouring of one's environment and effective use of what is available play a great role in surviving the ordeal. The player cannot move fast and their vision is limited by both the first person perspective and the slow turning speed of the camera. Because of these limitations, the unnerving atmosphere aided by some very effective sound design, and the fact that RE7 pulls no punches when it comes to its gruesome visuals, the game ends

up being a rather intense experience. At certain points the normal flow of gameplay is punctuated by extended "boss fights", where the player must defeat a certain member of the Baker family unit once and for all.

Compared to Dark Souls, RE7 certainly lacks many of that title's layers of complexity and features no interpretative flexibility to speak of. The more or less linear experience of the content, combined with the lack of multiplayer mode, and the generally low replay value of horror genre titles, put quite a few limits on what the gaming community can make of the game, and by extension the reach of any affinity spaces that may form around it as a generator. Yet, this is a title very much representative of the high-end of what the video game industry currently brings to the market and as such should give this researcher a viable baseline to work with.

5.3 Nioh & Deus Ex: Mankind Divided

As I went through the first comment samples I had collected it became clear that my initial hypotheses are likely to be confirmed and that the affinity spaces, which have emerged around LPs of Dark Souls and Resident Evil, will be very different ones indeed. Consequently, I became intrigued by what exploring the spectrum in-between the two to a greater degree could reveal and so decided to add a few more titles to the list. On one hand I wanted to have a title leaning closer to "Souls", with lots of intricacies, and depth of gameplay, but maybe less oblique and easier to get into, while on the other I needed a game that was story-driven like Resident Evil, but with a richer variety of mechanics and more space for exploration and player choice. Eventually, I decided that I have found decent enough candidates in the face of Team Ninja's Nioh (yes, somehow this ended up being the third Japanese game in my selection – unintentionally so) and Eidos Montreal's Deus Ex: Mankind Divided, which I will cover below in a more concise manner compared to the previous two titles.

5.3.1 Nioh

Nioh takes place in something of a parallel history of Earth's year 1600, where all Japanese myths and legends are a matter of fact rather than fiction and magic coexists with the technology of that period though few are sensitive to it and can utilize it. The player's character is William, a pre-

defined persona, and one such sensitive to magic individual, who gets involved in some mysterious dealings with an unknown adversary. Following his trail, William – a highly proficient swordsman – travels to Japan and joins forces with certain figures from Japans past against an ongoing demonic invasion, resulting in numerous battles which cover many places across the country and comprise the entirety of the game.

Long referred to as "Samurai Souls" by a multitude of online and offline video game media outlets, Nioh is a title that can indeed rival this particular action-RPG subgenre's progenitor in terms of gameplay depth and complexity. The combat mechanics and the game systems surrounding it are fairly different, yet revolve around the same core concepts of managing a limited stamina meter (the self-replenishing resource used for attacking and avoiding attacks) during the frequent skirmishes, while balancing the risk vs. reward aspect of exploration, where resting to regain one's resources and make use of the acquired experience to augment the character, also respawns all enemies in the area. Again the player navigates the labyrinthine environments in third person view, and again at the end of each filled with traps and treasures such labyrinth awaits a particularly difficult enemy against whom they have a choice on whether to summon other players to help or not.

Where the two titles differ a lot however is in their structure. While the "Souls" games feature a single world sprawling in all directions, both horizontally and vertically, which often tends to wrap on itself, Nioh is instead based on a rather straightforward mission by mission design, where the player chooses among a few available at any given time locations from a map menu, each of which is self-contained space. Furthermore, after completing any mission, the player is made aware of what they have found and what they have missed, all of which streamlines the process of exploration and diminishes the immersion somewhat. Speaking of which there is also no lore to uncover through the missions apart of occasional spirit "voice messages" that serve to clarify what has happened prior to William's arrival in the respective area. Nioh's narrative is a pretty traditional one and is covered almost entirely through cutscenes, so the game's community does not have to rebuild the story from the scattered pieces of text, or speculate about the artwork and item locations in the way that the "Souls"' one does, though some knowledge of Japanese history and mythology might come in handy for those who want to be able to truly make sense of all that takes place in this version of the land. These are two major ways in which the designers have lowered Nioh's overall complexity when compared to the "Souls" titles, which combined with the fact that it also features several times less the number of enemies the Souls games usually have (meaning way fewer tactics for the player to tackle and possible interactions to learn about) makes a convincing case that this is a title worth investigating some LPs of for my purposes.

5.3.2 Deus Ex: Mankind Divided

The final game that I am going to employ in service of my project is the latest instalment in the Deus Ex series – Mankind Divided. Unlike the others this title has a futuristic cyberpunk[15] setting and is set in the year 2029, where human augmentation has become a reality and a major source of social and economical issues, frequently used by the game's authors as a commentary on events and processes that transpired in real life (for example the widespread hostility against the so-called Augs mirrors racial and religious prejudice). As a work of science-fiction the game aims to contribute to the cross-media debate on contemporary advances in robotic and AI technologies and the blurring of the line between man and machine (all recurring themes in the cyberpunk genre). Yet, despite working with these fairly weighty concepts, the series borrows heavily from conspiracy theories to develop its setting and features the secret society of the Illuminati[16] as main antagonists working behind the scenes, though this particular game's protagonist – the augmented cyborg Adam Jensen, working for future Interpol – never actually engages with them directly. Instead he finds himself entangled in a web of political machinations that aim to galvanize the already high tensions existing between the various extremist fractions of augmented and regular people. Most of the gameplay takes place in Prague and its neighbouring Aug ghetto – Golem City.

Broadly speaking, Deus Ex resembles RE7 in that it utilizes first person view to facilitate its similar (on the surface at least) mix of stealth and action approaches to combat and exploration. However, this is where the similarities end, as over the course of the game the player can develop Jensen in a role-playing fashion not unlike Dark Souls or Nioh. As an augmented individual, he has access to a long list of modifications and abilities – he can become invisible, heavily armoured, move very fast, break through walls, install various vision modes, hidden weapons, hack machines, etc. – which gives the character extensive customizability, and that in turn feeds into the variety of ways one can achieve their goals in the game's world. As a result combat can be avoided almost entirely, or it can become the main focus of the gameplay depending on one's preference. Augmentations can also further increase the already generous amount of information the player is fed through their HUD about their surroundings. The game's several spacious hubs not only provide a lot of freedom to manoeuvre and improvise, they are also heavily populated with NPCs, many of which the player

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[15] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cyberpunk
[16] See "9 questions about the Illuminati you were too afraid to ask" (Edwards, 2016).

can communicate meaningfully (i.e. conversations can have multiple outcomes which may directly affect the story or the world) with – a key game mechanic, left largely unexplored by the other titles.

Deus Ex is similar to Dark Souls in that progression through the game is mostly not linear and the environment is designed with the intention to feel cohesive and wholesome. However a lot of it is purely optional, as the player can strictly pursue the main storyline and ignore the majority of the so-called side quests. Outside of conversations with NPCs and the usual cutscenes, the intricately woven storylines and the backgrounds of relevant characters and events are presented through numerous documents and e-mails, which require a lot of reading from the players. Those streaming the game need to decide whether to read all that aloud, or skip through this particular content. What Deus Ex has in common with RE7 is that in can just as easily feel like a movie for the viewer of the LP (albeit one of a very different genre), but curated to a much larger extent by the streamer and their choices rather than the game designers'. As such I think it rounds nicely the selection of titles and provides yet another singular mixture of gameplay elements and ideas that I am curious to see being eventually reflected in the affinity spaces of YouTube LP channels.

5.4 Summary

The chapter above served to introduce the reader to the four titles selected to have their LPs become parts of this research project. Firstly, and in most detail, I discussed Dark Souls – the game that appeared most likely to facilitate learning processes emerge within an affinity space dedicated to it, for reasons that I explored throughout that part of the text. Next, I covered Resident Evil VII, which was selected as something of a counterpoint to Dark Souls in terms of its content, complexity, and overall affordances allowed to the streaming player and their audience. Finally, I included Nioh and Deus Ex: Mankind Divided, which hypothetically should fit somewhere between the previous two titles' characteristics. Among the plentiful information available to disclose, I have presented the settings of all four games, their key gameplay mechanics and elements, as well as the main design goals and decisions, and how those may affect the practice of streaming said titles for an online audience. In Dark Souls and REVII's cases, I also briefly reviewed the history and reception of their respective series and how these have influenced the creation and development of the two gaming communities.

CHAPTER SIX:

COMPARISON AND EVALUATION OF THE LEARNING POTENTIAL OF THE FEATURED AFFINITY SPACES

With this part of the study I will attempt to answer my first and second research questions. Namely whether there are significant differences in the viewer-produced practices and content to be found among affinity spaces, which deal with different LPs of a given game-generator, and also how do the various titles compare when played by the same streamer. And also what types of discourses are utilized by the users of the affinity spaces and how that affects the content of the playthroughs themselves. In order to do so I will first explicate the system, which I have developed and utilized to interpret and categorize the users' input from the comment sections of all the relevant YouTube videos, and present the resulting data. This in turn will be followed by an analysis of said results on a per game basis and an evaluation of the most complex entries available for each LP. Finally, the chapter will close with a full list of the main findings and a more in-depth discussion of their implications, both for my questions and potential future research.

It would appear that in certain ways the investigation of online affinity spaces bears strong resemblance to some of the practices of archaeological science. While Web 2.0 websites and the activities conducted therein are on one hand fluid and dynamic, always brimming with the potential of becoming something else characteristic of all the programmable matter that is software, they are also digital *artefacts* and as such some part of them remains frozen in time, accumulating layers upon layers of digital "fossil records" while said artefacts hurtle through the reaches of cyberspace. Politics of the materiality of digital artefacts (Leonardi, 2010) aside, this puts into perspective the issues of evaluating any effects the enactment of online affinity space may have on those that take part in their assembly.

Quality of learning in particular is a very difficult target, as decades of reform of policies of education and assessment have shown (Masters, 2013). Nevertheless, if situated learning theory has established one thing with relative certainty, it is that true learning occurs first and foremost as an interaction – or transaction – in whatever culturally organized setting the process happens to be taking place in (Barab & Plucker, 2002). Social-semiotic spaces are precisely such culturally organized settings, which allow us to explore the practices of learning in some detail by peeling away the layers of knowledge transactions recorded in the digital artefacts they comprise (Jung & Stolterman, 2012) and putting them under a metaphorical microscope. But metaphorical or not, what exactly should this microscope be attuned to perceive?

Since the social-semiotic spaces in question are YouTube channels, their comment sections and their viewership statistics represent the de facto records of said interactions and any take on evaluating the practices of learning within the affinity space should start there. The first step is to establish all the principal functions that comments made under a given "Let's Play" video may have and determine those, which enable transactions of knowledge among the participants. This is an unavoidably reductive process as with any individual statement the meaning of these comments will be subjective to a certain degree.

To further complicate things more often than not a comment has a fragmented nature that serves a purpose wholly defined by presumed context awareness, expected to be shared between viewer, streamer, and other potential readers. It follows that the fine details will not always be too clear, but then again they are not really needed to be so. Even if sometimes the precise intent of a comment cannot be discerned in its entirety, its explicit and implicit functions in the affinity space remain open to a very much valid interpretation, insofar that the researcher is prepared and willing to investigate the barrage of (pop)cultural references that is being thrown at them on many an occasion. In many respects the process has a lot in common with thematic content analysis, which appears to be frequently practiced in the research of online communities of various natures as some literature reviews suggest (see for ex. Macia & Garcia, 2016).

Thus, in the case of LP videos, I have arrived at three main functional categories for those comments that have to do directly with the streamed content at hand; and a fourth one, which basically houses all those that either do not do so, or which in doing so leave the boundaries of their respective affinity space, for ex. by discussing a completely different game, or other LP channel(s). Since multiple functions per single comment are not necessarily that rare, which is to say that the categories are not mutually exclusive, I chose to employ them as tags in a custom coding system the details of which I have outlined below.

6.1 Comment Function Tags (CFTs)

Aiming to account for the often complex character of the comments made under LP videos on YouTube in its entirety, I have developed a custom coding system whereby every comment will be analysed and tagged according to its content and user intent. These tags represent an extensive set of emergent codes and categories (Saldana, 2009) applied per the principles of thematic content analysis to uncover the relevant patterns within the data (Green & Thorogood, 2004). There are 20

tags in total, arranged in four categories, which effectively serve to exhaust all possible comment functions (at least among those found in the episodes selected for data collection), hence the name they were given being "comment function tags", or CFT for short. There is also a fifth supplementary category with two special tags used to mark the streamer's own comments, and those which while facilitating a knowledge transaction do so in a way that is frowned upon, aka – spoilers. While depending on the channel and the streamer's own preferences, what exactly constitutes a spoiler varies, the latter are usually singled out by the channel's users themselves. A single comment can in theory be tagged with every single tag and fall in all the main categories simultaneously, but in reality most comments warrant the use of only one or two – occasionally up to four – tags in order to be described accurately.

As I have mentioned earlier, the tags themselves were derived as emergent codes by sifting through all the commentary content and writing down all the semiotic functions[17] each comment has (Long, 2019). As is the case with more complex data sets codes are assigned to patterns that form naturally within qualitative data for these tend to reflect the repetitive structure of action and consequence characteristic of human interaction (Saldana, 2009). A follow-up pass at the so accumulated data revealed the underlying themes, which were then used as the categories the tags were sorted into. Note that not all thematic overlaps are immediately obvious. For example [b1]'s "player line quote" and "favourite moment reference" (often richly adorned with emoticons) may not seem to fulfil the same function at first, but are in fact the very same thing. The player's line quote (and by extension the player's reaction) may be the exact thing provoking the viewer's own reaction, and/or serves to mark the moment within the video that has emotionally affected the viewer. It's a lot more efficient than describing in text what went on in that particular situation, while giving a lot more information about it than simply writing down the time stamp. I will now give a brief description of each tag and their respective categories accompanied by select examples from one of the investigated "Let's Play" segments.

A] Evaluation

One of the most basic reactions of people to what they experience in life, sometimes done in the spur of the moment, others – decided on through the accumulation of various impressions over a period of time – is to judge said experience in terms of their subjective perception for good, bad, and that grey area between that is too often forgotten by those quick to idealize what they love and

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[17] The term semiotic function is used here in the sense of functionality revealed through the semiotic study of a written text. Not to be confused with Piaget's semiotic function as used in theory of cognitive development.

hate. It is only natural to expect to find a significant number of statements in the affinity space to showcase this particular human tendency and thus deal with the evaluation of the media content and its author. There are five main subtypes to be found among comments made in that vein:

[a1] praise / thanks / support (general)

- This tag applies to comments containing expressions of positive evaluation, and/or personal appreciation for the streamer and their work that may or may not be directly related to the specific episode they are being made on. Examples would include the presence of sentences such as *"Keep up the good work!"* and *"Thank you for a wonderful LP"*.

[a2] praise (gameplay)

- This one applies to comments that give credit to the streamer's skills in handling the game featured in their LP and by extension the mental or manual faculties involved in the process. It also applies to comments on those aspects of the game's design that facilitate skilful play. Among the examples would be lines like: *"Did...did she just parry a rapier, those are like the hardest weapons to parry, and she did it on the FIRST TRY!"* and *"I didn't think I would ever see anyone willingly fight the demons at the bottom"*.

[a3] insult / negative appraisal / "trolling"

- Since YouTube is a part of the Internet that is blessed with public access for all, this means that on occasion there will be also those whose sole goal is to ruin the experience of others, or who may have valid criticisms, but express them in a rude and confrontational manner. The [a3] tag applies to their entries, as well as those containing any negative qualifications of the streamer such as *"I find [her voice] incredibly grating"*. Negative reactions aimed at other viewers – righteous or otherwise – will also be slotted here.

[a4] technical / upload (stream)

- These are remarks and suggestions concerned with the technical aspects and/or the upload frequency/structure of the stream and the viewer's experience with it, positive and negative alike. A typical example would be: *"Is it just me or is the video a bit dark? If other people have this problem, could you possibly bump up either the ingame or the recording brightness a bit? It's weird not being able to see things referred to in the video."*

[a5] technical / design (game)

- This tag relates to comments discussing the technical side of the game in question and also any streamer or design decisions that have to do with the game in terms of software and its settings. Any evaluations of the game as a whole would also fit this description. Relevant examples are: *"these ragdoll physics are so stupid glad they fixed it in ds2"* and *"Why do you still play this offline? You're really missing out on a major - and compelling - component of the game"*.

B] Affect

As with any kind of media those consuming it frequently feel prompted to share their most favourite moments and situations, alongside a description of their state of mind that the events have caused, or in which they were experienced. This is a pretty straightforward category with only two subtypes, which aim to account for some of the more subtle differences in how viewers express the way in which they are emotionally affected by the content on display.

[b1] player line quote / favourite moment reference

- Quoting the vocal reaction of the streamer is often used to refer to said favourite moments. These comments are usually "timestamped", so that whoever is reading them can click the resulting hyperlink and go directly to the part of the video being referenced. Viewers also tend to use the opportunity to make a joke out of said vocal reactions. E.g. *"2:06 LOLed so hard at that serpent soldier's death!!"* or *"'I wanna fall on this guy so hard' - Kay being lewd, 2014"*.

[b2] reaction to / anticipation of gameplay event

- This tag marks comments that are once again reactions to what occurred in the playthrough, but these must be either nonspecific events, which are referred to as a matter of principle – for ex. *"Everyone's favorite part of a blind run, the mimic!";* or are the results of player actions made unknowingly or unintentionally – *"Did that just happen? Did you do a 180 turn right before the bonfire at the top of sen's fortress to go CHECK FOR SIEGMEYER'S NAME. I had no words when I saw that happen. nothing described it adequately."*. Furthermore, this tag will apply also for comments, which state the viewer's expectations of what they know in advance is going to happen at a later point in time. Reactions to an LP episode in its entirety or the game's setting for the duration also fall into this category. Cheering the upload of the new episode, which more excited viewers tend to do pretty regularly, also calls for a B2 tag.

C] Knowledge

This is the category that is the main focus of this part of the research project. The following seven tags are used to mark the variety of ways in which certain comments function to exchange knowledge, present ideas, compare approaches, and as a whole contribute – explicitly or implicitly – to the learning experiences of both the streamer and their viewers within the affinity space of the LP-focused YouTube channels. As a rule the C entries are longer on average than those placed solely in the other categories as they contain more exposition, but their complexity will be evaluated separately from their function. The letter C was not picked accidentally, but because it happens to stand for Communication, Cognition and Cooperation – the three tenets of social self-organization (as per Fuchs & Hofkirchner, 2005), and one or more of which processes can be seen represented in the content marked with any of the following tags:

[c1] advice / correction / know-how / lore (systems/items/skills)

- With these comments people offer recommendations on how to proceed in terms of the game's systems and mechanics, how to understand some of them, and how to make better use of the various items available in the game, as those are narrowly enmeshed with the rules by which the game plays. These are often provoked by viewers witnessing occasional or repeated failures by the streamer to utilize certain affordances within the context of a particular LP episode. Unsurprisingly, arguments between the viewers over the exact nature of facts and claims tend to occur fairly regularly in this and the following categories. For example: *"FYI if you see a spell being sold by a merchant that you already own, like heavy soul arrow for example, and buy it you can attune it twice, so you could have 2 stacks of 12 Heavy Soul Arrow instead of 1 stack of Heavy and 1 stack of Standard.";* or as in: *"I'm sure someone has probably said this but, eating a humanity will heal you full. They're great to use if you run out of Estus.".*

[c2] advice / correction / know-how / lore (level/enemies/npcs)

- Much like the above, but in this case the goal is to inform the player or others as to how to effectively deal with navigating the environment or engage with the enemies and non-player characters located within it. Discussions of aspects of the game's lore and by extension the development of the game's narrative as perceived by the player and their viewers appear most frequently in this subtype. This tag will be used to mark comments and exchanges like: *"You pondered the self-changing direction of the boulders; [...] the pressure plates that*

trigger the arrow traps are also designed to change the boulder's direction, so the boulders are always in the path of the ascending player.   [InsignificantConnor]

+InsignificantConnor That can't be true - the boulders change paths in the beginning of the video without Kay stepping on a plate in the meantime. [omnisemantic1]".

Together with the previous category, these seem to be the most frequently encountered Knowledge tags for the majority of LPs.

[c3] acknowledges personal learning / discovery

- Comments such as these are left for the express purpose of acknowledging what the person making them has learned about the game by means of the LP; or in some cases what the LP (be it in terms of the actual gameplay or the streamer's commentary) has generated doubts about, potentially refuting an idea they might have had prior to witnessing an alternative explanation. A couple of examples: *"I had no idea you could reach and kill the giant that opens the gate to sen's fortress."; "Sometimes I see you parry several times in a row and I think I should learn that... then other times I see you missing them all the time and I conclude it's still not worth it".*

[c4] shares personal experience

- In lieu with the fact that YouTube is a Web 2.0 social network (itself embedded within the larger such network of Google+, albeit with questionable commercial success), many users utilize the platform to share their personal experiences and preferences as they relate to the content uploaded to it, and LP channels are no different in that respect. Consecutively, one can expect a fair share of comments that function along these lines. However, here the context is one of learning through comparison, as these comments allow the reader to consider different approaches and outcomes. Example comments would be: *"Thanks Kay, you inspired me. Finally I started my rerun with two handed knight. It has been really fun =) Claymore for victory!"; "That mimic is a pretty cruel joke if you don't have online messages enabled. There weren't any there for me, but I'd been smacking every chest up to that point anyways just because I noticed that 'mimic' was one of the nouns you could add into orange soapstone messages".*

[c5] makes an inquiry (on topic)

- This tag should be pretty self-explanatory and refers to any comments left by users explicitly posing a question to the streamer or the channel as a whole that is contributing in one way or another to the learning processes within the LP affinity space, as in: *"Whenever I see a*

level design like this (replete with traps), it breaks the immersion. Who would spend the resources to build something like this, to live or work there? What purpose does it serve?".

[c6] answers a question (on topic)

- The reciprocal tag of the previous one, marking direct answers to open questions. As these comments usually supply some kind of previously unspecified knowledge, they often double up with C2. Here are some answers to the question stated above: *"It's badly translated 'sen' means thousand in Japanese. The original name of the place translates to 'fortress of a thousand traps' and it's designed to test if an undead is worthy of entering anor londo.";* *"It's been repurposed to find an undead worthy of entering anor londo. It's all part of Gwyn/ Frampt and their regime's plan."*

[c7] speculation (on topic)

- The last tag from the learning category is used for those comments that contain hypotheses about game lore, gameplay events, designer intentions, etc. While these may indeed be possible explanations and as such enrich the discussion as a whole, they either remain unlikely to be confirmed by another source, or are guesses that have no factual basis. For example: *"I wonder if the reason they dont trigger pressure plates despite being so large might have something to do with the word hollow?"* This tag also applies to speculative comments about what the streamer, or the viewer might or might not do in similar, future, or hypothetical situations.

D] Others

The final main category is basically used for all the content that does not fit in any of the previous ones, even though some comments may exhibit overlapping characteristics. Apart of some out of context functional material, the tags in it serve to mark off-topic references, random jokes, indecipherable statements, and other eccentricities. It stands to reason that there will likely be a disproportional increase of this type of content in those channels, which have failed to attain or sustain the core functionality of affinity spaces.

[d1] reference to another game (or some other type of media)

- If at any time a comment evokes a title different than the one featured in the LP, this tag will be applied. Its presence does not necessarily mean that the comment is dysfunctional, just

that the content referred to is outside of the core network of the affinity space. Often these comments deal with other games from the series (if such exist), or titles that play similarly or share the same design values, like: *"You should look into Demon Souls if you have access to a PS3 - the atmosphere is even better, though the mechanics are less refined."*

[d2] reference to other YouTube channel(s) (or external sources related to the game-generator)

- This tag is similar in its application to the one above, but focused on comments referencing other YT channels dealing with LP videos, or streamers working on live platforms like Twitch. Also used for marking mentions of external sources such as Reddit, Twitter, Facebook, etc. *"I tried watching Day9's play through and holy Christ i wanted to tear my hair out every few seconds xD"; "You did miss an easy bonfire. But it's quite well hidden. You will have to look it up on a wiki i think.".*

[d3] off-topic, or otherwise irrelevant

- Used for all statements, which are functionally unrelated to any of the proceedings taking place in the affinity space: *"Do we mean as opposed to 'Tie-un-ite'? Hrm. I find that then that I pronounce it either way."; "It would make a great animated GIF with the text 'Here, have a snake' or maybe 'Get snaKT, scrub'".*

[d4] viewer exchange fragment (also jokes/memes)

- This tag is reserved for comments that have no meaning outside of a specific conversation initiated at an earlier point with another viewer, or with the player. These are usually short phrases that may aim to communicate curtly something across, or jokes, which while related to the gameplay events are end in themselves and do not include any useful information. Some examples: *"Haha, I love the idea of going to Sen's Fortress for a picnic :)"; "Once you let anything come between Kay and sweet alluring loot, the game has already won."; "lol same with me";* as opposed to *"This man is obviously lying, there'll never be any other mimic, and it's definitely not a reason to attack every treasure chest you find before opening it. That'd just be silly",* which while sarcastic actually specifies a way of behaviour that is being actively recommended to the player. Furthermore, comments which are continuations of previous ones, but do not add to, or change the meaning of the original statement will also be tagged with D4.

[d5] nondescript / unknown

- This particular tag applies to those comments, which the author of this text either cannot understand the meaning of, or the meaning of which cannot be attributed any function to. Their meaning is clear more often than not (unless they're in other language other than English), but the comments still cannot be placed in any category. Tagged with D5 content includes exclamations like: *"Almost there!!!"*, or random mentions in passing as *"the way you say loot sounds like lute :D no hate just observation."*, etc.

[d6] summary of events / fan fiction

- On occasion some viewers seem to use the comments section for fan fiction purposes of sorts whereby they make up a story based on the events in the current LP episode. While a creative activity, it is also an end in itself and does not perform any further learning function beyond an exercise for the mind of its author. While such comments are too long to be included as an example in these descriptions, this category also applies to some well shorter comments that are simply a statement of fact pertaining to the episode's content, but one that does not include evaluation, reaction, or knowledge transaction of any sort.

S] Special

Much as its name suggests, this is a special category the tags in which are used to account for the cases where the streamer uses the comment section to communicate with their viewers, or when comments, while otherwise falling in any of the other categories are (or can legitimately be) flagged as spoilers by the community, or the owner of the channel. The rules for what constitutes a spoiler are usually set in the beginning episode of every LP and comments which do not comply with those cannot be considered as knowledge transactions within the affinity space, since they were never meant to be written in the first place.

[s1] comment by the player

- While most direct communication with the viewers is done through the video content itself, the streamers sometimes also take up to the message boards to engage with their audience. This tag will be used in conjunction with all others apart of D4 if it is applicable, which will be overridden instead (as player exchange fragments are functionally different).

[s2] spoiler

- To the extent to which the so-called "blind runs" are the most interesting from a learning perspective, within the affinity spaces that have emerged around their production there is a fine line between participating and being helpful and outright "spoiling" the experience of the player and/or their viewers, by revealing things they would rather arrive at on their own. The community itself decides where that line will be drawn, so this tag will mark comments where that was deemed to be the case, and as such it is only used in conjunction with other tags.

6.1.1 Explaining knowledge tag overrides

With regard to CFTs there are a few moments that I would like to go into a bit more detail about. The first are the conditions in which certain tags will be used instead of others despite that said other tags are also correct for the comment in question. I have already referred to these so-called overrides when discussing the player's own comments, which are tagged separately of the viewer exchange fragments. The rest of the overrides occur exclusively in the "Knowledge" category and have to do with the necessary presence of tags that specify the commenter's relation to the shared information, which will be useful in analysing and comparing the more intricate aspects of viewer behaviour. However, in order not to increase the amount of C tags disproportionately, tag overrides will be utilized in the following scenarios:

- [c6] will be used every time a comment is a direct answer to a question and would otherwise warrant a [c1], [c2] or [c4] tag. If more than one C tags are applicable to a single comment, [c6] will override only one of those depending on the context.
- Similar to the above, [c4] will override any [c1] or [c2] tag, but only one of those, if both are used on the same comment (which one is overridden is once again decided based on the context).

Note that in both cases outlined above the overrides apply only when there is an overlap between the tags in terms of which knowledge transaction they refer to. In other words it is possible for example to have a [c1][c2][c4] comment, if it contains three distinct knowledge transactions.

6.1.2 Some preliminary hypotheses

Now that I have introduced the reader to all the four titles, which are to be evaluated in terms of how they fulfill their roles as affinity space generators; and that I believe I have sufficiently familiarized them with the context and methodology of the study; in accordance with which, the following hypotheses can be put forward for verification, and upon careful consideration of what should reflect certain reasonable expectations:

- Based on the list of features present in the four game-generators, one would expect all Dark Souls playthroughs to drive the highest frequencies of gaming literacy knowledge transactions overall within their respective spaces, when compared with RE7, which should have the lowest, regardless of the streamer's "performance profile".
- The person whose Dark Souls LP produced the social-semiotic space with the highest frequencies of gaming literacy knowledge transactions will likely do so across all other LPs, regardless of the exact nature of the game-generator.
- The frequency of knowledge transactions within an affinity space (i.e. the C] category) should be inversely related to the amount of D] comments, meaning those which do not perform any function that fits the categories of A] Evaluation; B] Affect; and C] Knowledge.

6.2 CFT frequencies data of the selected LP runs (in alphabetical order of game titles and channels)

In Appendix I, the reader may find displayed the summaries of the comment function data sets sampled from all the LP channels that I have focused on in this research. This data concerns only CFT frequencies per (sub)-category and the total percentages of all five categories accumulated for each LP run as illustrated by the accompanying pie charts. The statistic "functional density" refers to the overall amount of CFTs per the total number of comments in the sample and will be evoked in later discussions of functional complexity. The collected and processed comment data is provided in full in Appendix II.

6.3 CFTs frequencies – reviewing the results

It is time to return to the research question the answer to which was pursued by this part of the project. As the reader should recall, my intention was to compare whether there are significant differences between the knowledge sharing practices of different affinity spaces that have emerged around playthroughs of the same game on the one hand, and within the same affinity space, but with different game-generators on the other. Since the affinity spaces in this case are YouTube channels, this meant that I had to analyze the comment sections of the LPs of select video game titles and categorize their content according to the function(s) each comment serves in the context of the space. My approach to establishing this involved employing a coding system utilizing tags, one of the categories of which would serve to mark those entries which function as vehicles for the sharing of gaming literacy information.

Upon presenting the four titles operating as affinity space generators, which I would focus on, I also proposed three hypotheses based on the various game design features characteristic of each of them and on my expectations of how the streamer's performance should affect the results. The first was that the affinity spaces that emerged around Dark Soul, this being the title that is the most complex and requires the most from the players, both individually and in terms of cooperation, should produce the most knowledge sharing entries per number of comments, when compared to Resident Evil 7, which should assume the opposite position, irrelevant of the streamer playing the games. The second was that whoever of the four streamers makes the Dark Souls LP with the most instances of knowledge sharing entries per number of comments will likely do so for all other titles as well. And finally, I hypothesised that we should expect to see an inverse relationship between the ratios of the *Knowledge* and *Others* CFT categories, meaning the gaming literacy oriented material and the general "noise" present in any one affinity space. Keeping all of this in mind, let us see what the findings actually showed, first per game-generator, and then when we put all the data together.

6.3.1 Dark Souls – summary of findings

In interpreting and comparing the results, let us first begin with the four Dark Souls LPs. The category, comments of which occur with similar frequency among all four playthroughs, is the one of *Affect* aka B]. This makes sense as of all titles tested this is probably the most tightly controlled run and even though the players have a relative freedom of exploring their environment, the events which tend to provoke emotional response (for ex. the frequently referenced first appearance of a Mimic chest, or finally finding the coveted "Sen's Fortress" bonfire) remain more or less the same

amount. About every sixth comment made under the videos of three of the four LP segments is one of *Affect*, while in Odd's case that number is slightly lower at 14%. While it is the gameplay events that dictate the overall frequency of *Affect* comments, the extent to which the player's personal performance contributes to such responses can be seen in the differences between the two *Affect* subcategories. [b1] tags (a player line quote or favourite moment reference) almost exclusively refer to either the streamer's narration or their play in a given moment of the LP, and once we take this into account we can see the picture from a different angle. Masterkizz is clearly the commenter whose personal actions and reactions are driving the *Affect* responses of his viewers the most, with nearly 70% of all the *Affect* tags being [b1], followed by Kay who has a little over 60% in that subcategory. Odd's *Affect* distribution is close to equal at 47, 2% [b1], while KineticGTR only has slightly over a third of his *Affect* comments tagged with this particular CFT at 35, 5% (the reader will surely note that these ratios are derived from converting the values of the CFT tags being discussed).

Things look decidedly different in the *Evaluation* category A]. Here we have two streamers with nearly a quarter of their total comment numbers being *Evaluation*, while the other two have only about half that. This could mean one of several things – either Masterkizz and Kay have personalities and/or gaming skills much more notable (or problematic) than Odd and Kinetic, or there may be a technical matter present in these segments, which results in viewers acting on it. A quick look through the subcategories reveals that the latter is not the case, nor have any of the streamers been heavily criticised in the comment sections. It must be Masterkizz' and Kay's personal performances then, but where the former's LP sports a [a1] vs. [a2] distribution skewed heavily in favour of [a1] (i.e. general praise related to personal attitude) at 90%, Kay's is largely the opposite, with [a2] (that is gameplay prowess) standing at 63%. These results fall in line with the *Affect* ones from earlier, which suggest that Masterkizz' and Kay's performances tend to define a large percent of the emotional comments, however Masterkizz appears to do so almost entirely courtesy of his (easygoing) behaviour, while Kay easily champions the group of streamers in terms of gameplay skills as far as their viewers are concerned. It bears mentioning that with Dark Souls being the extremely difficult game that it is, it is predominantly played by male, so-called "hardcore" gamers, so Kay being female undoubtedly prompts a higher percent of the people watching to react to her playing style, both as a matter of surprise and with the goal of acknowledging the rarity of her achievements.

This brings us to the last two main CFT categories (the *Special* category by its nature does not provide data relevant to the discussion – it exists mostly for consistency), as they happen to be interconnected perhaps more so than the rest. With 57, 19% Odd is clearly the streamer whose

Dark Souls playthrough has produced the highest frequency of *Knowledge* category C] tags and thus knowledge transactions occurring within the affinity space. He is followed by KineticGTR and Kay with 47, 92% and 45, 18% respectively. Masterkizz meanwhile is far behind with 30, 34%, while at the same time leading by a very substantial amount in the *Others* category, with 27, 34%, whereas KineticGTR has 17, 19%, followed by Odd – 14, 38%, and Kay with the lowest – 11, 68%. What to make of these?

As was discussed previously in chapter 6.1, the *Others* category D] accommodates mostly comments, which serve little to no constructive function within the boundaries of the affinity space. While emotion and evaluation are natural reactions to the experience of any type of media content, what *Others* entries are composed of is not unlike the unavoidable noise in a classroom (admittedly not the single best analogy for a YouTube channel there could be). It is only logical then that the more knowledge transactions are prompted by a given LP, the less unfocused "noise" one should expect to encounter in the respective affinity space, and Masterkizz' case appears to confirm this hypothesis. The *Others* values of the other streamers are nested closer together, but nevertheless Kay has the lowest one instead of Odd, which would be the most straightforward result. However, as mentioned in 6.2, Kay is unlike the other streamers, because she utilizes a passive streaming posture and has no interest in maintaining and expanding her YouTube channel. She has no established audience prior to her Dark Souls LP and has the unique honour of being featured in a couple of books and articles on the topic of the game that are usually the domain of people interested in Dark Souls specifically, which makes her viewers likely to be more focused and invested than usual and this assumption is further supported by the fact that her *Knowledge* entries happen to feature a disproportionate amount of [c4] tags, i.e. comments sharing own experience (all others are decidedly dominated by [c1] & [c2], i.e. advice / correction / know-how / lore for various gameplay elements). This should compensate for the small difference in the *Others* category and leaves Odd as the outlier whose approach to making a blind "Let's Play" of Dark Souls has resulted in the affinity space with highest frequencies of knowledge transactions (and with all other categories curiously balanced at around 14%). I will return to elaborate some more on these results later on in Chapter 8 when I analyse the particularities of each streamer's performance.

6.3.2 Nioh & Deus Ex: Mankind Divided – summary of findings

Since Christopher Odd so convincingly assumed the "winning" place in terms of how many knowledge sharing comments circulate through his Dark Souls LP, one has to wonder whether these or similar results can be confirmed for other LPs in his YouTube channel. Thus, before I switch to the LPs of Resident Evil 7, I picked a couple of the other streamers in that group and collected data from the comment sections of two other games they have performed a playthrough of, the features of which as previously discussed should fall between Dark Souls and RE7 as far as information exchange among players is concerned.

In Nioh – the game that follows closely in Dark Souls' footsteps, but is nevertheless a more streamlined title – the results of Odd and Fightin Cowboy are very close as a whole in the *Evaluation* and *Affect* CFT categories, where the differences between them hover around 3%. When it comes to the *Knowledge* and *Others* categories however, Odd increases his lead with 7.5% for *Knowledge* tags, which also means he must have accumulated some fewer *Others* tags at 27, 11% vs. 33, 77% for Fightin Cowboy. These results seem to fall in line with the hypothesis put forward in the previous section that the *Knowledge* and *Others* variables are governed by inverse variation and also appear to confirm both that Odd drives high numbers of knowledge transactions through his LPs and that overall Nioh generates less gaming literacy exchange than Dark Souls.

Looking into how the subtypes of *Knowledge* entries are distributed for the two streamers reveals something unexpected. Unlike Odd, whose vast majority of *Knowledge* tags are of the [c1] and [c2] variety (i.e. what should normally be the case), together standing at no less than 74%, Fightin Cowboy's *Knowledge* category is mostly comprised of [c4] (sharing of personal experience) CFTs at 38%, compared to only 6% for Odd's LP. Going through the contents of these comments explains this deviation from expectations in two ways, which are actually interconnected. First, unlike with Dark Souls, the LP segment that I focused on for this title includes a boss fight in the end, one which also marks the first substantial increase in the game's difficulty curve. For Fightin Cowboy's LP that meant that a lot of viewers who seem to have been playing the game in parallel with the streamer were stuck at this boss, if not at the time of upload of that particular episode, then at least shortly prior to it. In fact, while Christopher Odd's *Knowledge* comments were more or less equally spread over the course of the three episodes covering this mission, the overwhelming majority of his peer's knowledge transactions were conducted in that third episode[18], meaning that had I opted to not include it, the difference in terms of the *Knowledge* and *Others* ratios between the two would have increased dramatically.

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[18] Both streamers had this content structured in the exact same way – two episodes for the area prior to the boss and one for the boss fight itself.

The other title – Deus Ex: Mankind Divided, which still provides fairly complex gameplay, but lowers the intensity considerably compared to Dark Souls and Nioh, compares data acquired from Odd's LP with that of Galm. Of all four games this is the one where the playthrough varies the most from one player to the next, and that is made obvious by the fact that even though I have utilized LP footage taking place between two fixed key events in the game, it has taken Odd just over seventy minutes to get from point A to point B, as opposed to Galm's 106. This difference of course does not reflect anything in terms of player skills, but rather that Galm has decided to take his time exploring and dedicated more effort to the side content of the game, which becomes clear upon inspecting their full LP lengths – only 37 episodes in total for Odd and 80 for Galm, with the episodes of both LPs usually spanning between 30 and 40 minutes each.

The percentage of comments functioning as *Evaluation* is pretty close for both streamers, with a little over 14% for Galm and about 18% for Odd. The *Affect* category however shows a rather significant discrepancy between the two, at 23% for Galm's LP and slightly less than 15% for Odd's. This sharp increase in the numbers of emotional responses has to do largely with the former's very controversial decision to provoke and proceed with a shootout in an area populated with civilians, which leads to him incidentally killing a pregnant woman – a moment referred to in most of the [b1] comments. The CFTs in the other two categories are distributed similar to the previous case, except that the difference is larger (also due to the *Affect* situation described above), with Odd's knowledge transactions amounting to approximately 38% accompanied by *Others* tags at just over 27%. Galm's playthrough meanwhile has resulted in 24, 78% *Knowledge*-type CFTs and around 38% of his viewer's responses being categorized as *Others*. Once again the results remain consistent with Odd's tendency to drive high frequencies of comments aiming to share knowledge among the participants of the affinity space, and with the hypothesis that the complexity of the game-generator is directly related to the overall amount of gaming literacy information in exchange. The inverse variation that exists between the *Knowledge* and *Others* CFTs is also reconfirmed by this data.

6.3.3 Resident Evil 7 – summary of findings

The final piece of comment section data in this part of the study was sourced from four LPs of the survival horror journey Resident Evil 7. As described in 5.4, this is the game where I expect to find the lowest values for knowledge sharing CFTs across all streamers compared to all three other titles and it would appear that my hypothesis has been correct for the most part. The one exception

is Fightin Cowboy's RE7 total *Knowledge* percentage – 26, 06%, which is slightly higher than Galm's Deus Ex results, standing at 24, 78%. In comparison to the other three RE7 LPs' *Knowledge*-type tag frequencies – 18, 59%; 20, 47%; and 15, 82%; for Centerstrain, Galm, and Odd respectively – Fightin Cowboy's result does indeed stand out, but upon closer examination there seems to be nothing in particular about his gameplay or narration in these episodes, which may have caused that. Rather, similar to his Nioh playthrough, it would appear that many of his viewers tend to play the game at the same time with their preferred streamer and so have more on-hand knowledge to dispense on average about the game's mechanics and secrets. This further points to the position of the viewers' population being in an interesting three-way dynamic with the streamer's personal performance on one hand, and the complexity of the game-generator's features on the other, in co-producing the optimal learning potential of the affinity space of an LP YouTube channel.

Meanwhile, the attitude of Fightin Cowboys can be said to stand in a relatively stark contrast to that of your average RE7 LP viewer, who more often than not appears to be very fond of the narrative: *"I love horror games, but I'm too afraid to play them by myself, so I'd rather watch others do it for me."* Comments echoing this sentiment were to be found under all the episodes, but their peak was most definitely at Christopher Odd's playthrough. The so pronounced difference of experience with the game in the overall viewer base is reflected directly by the results with Odd actually accumulating the lowest percentage of knowledge transactions for his LP of this particular game. However, at 23, 83% his *Others* category CFTs were also the lowest of the four, followed by Fightin Cowboy with 27, 46%, Centerstrain with 29, 49%, and Galm far ahead with 38, 59%, thus breaking away from the inverse variation dynamic, which was characteristic of the *Knowledge* and *Others* CFTs relationship in the LPs of all other titles. How does that work out?

The answer is that in the case of Resident Evil 7 the knowledge transaction responses, which Odd usually gathers, have been pushed aside to allow for a much higher than usual concentration of *Affect*-type CFTs. Standing at approximately 30%, it is the single highest *Affect* category result from all LPs across all games – in most cases by about twice the measure of the juxtaposed values – a clear outlier, which is made possible for two reasons. The first is Odd's tendency to apply a partial role-playing aspect to his performances, which while a far cry from loosing oneself in the character, still serves to shorten the distance between viewer and player experience. This will be discussed in more detail at a later point, but for a horror game that thrives on jump scares and tension his approach results in a much more "movie-like" flow, where Odd handles moments of panic and intensity much more believably than those streamers who either overreact to whatever the game throws at them, or do not immerse themselves sufficiently in the gameplay as to not get overly

scared themselves. This brings me to the other important moment, which is that I found this particular playthrough to have been the subject of an article on the popular gaming blog Kotaku, one saying in a nutshell that if you happen to be too afraid to play through RE7 on your own, this is basically the next best thing (Jackson, 2017). Undoubtedly, this has served to increase significantly the number of people who would view the playthrough for these reasons rather than play the title themselves and share their experience with others in the process.

6.3.4 Final CFT data analysis and results discussion

So what outcome do these results entail for my first research question, namely can there be observed a significant difference among different affinity spaces that have emerged around play-throughs of the same game, in terms of the knowledge shared therein, and furthermore what about among the same affinity spaces, but with different game titles?

First of all there is indeed a significant difference to be witnessed between the content in affinity spaces that have emerged around playthroughs of different games – the average frequency of knowledge sharing entries for the four Dark Souls LPs is slightly over 45%, whereas the Resident Evil 7 average was only just above 20%. This is more than significant – it is a massive 25% difference, and yet the contrast is even a bit sharper among the Dark Souls playthroughs themselves depending on their performer, where Christopher Odd's results concentrated in the *Knowledge* category surpass those of Masterkizz with 26, 85%. Considering that depending on specific circumstances there seems to be significant variation within the data, instances of which were discussed earlier, it is hard to say with certainty, which of the two is ultimately the more influential factor – game or performer – but at least these numbers suggest that the importance of both is of a similar order of magnitude. A lot more research dedicated to this particular aspect of "Let's Play" videos will have to be done, if some more clearly defined patterns are to be discerned.

As far as the three hypotheses that I put forward in chapter 5 are concerned, they ended up being confirmed for the most part; though for two of these there were exceptions to be found. The one that was verified unconditionally was the proposition that any Dark Souls LP will generate an affinity space that will process more knowledge exchanges than any RE7 one. Indeed, with even as low as 30% of the *Knowledge* category CFTs, the Souls playthrough of Masterkizz has more frequent instances of knowledge sharing than FightinCowboy's highest-scoring RE7 LP at 26%. Meanwhile, the hypothesis that the highest-scoring in terms of knowledge transactions Dark Souls streamer, will

remain such for all other game-generators did hold true for Deus Ex and Nioh, but not for Resident Evil 7. In fact, not only did not Odd's LP produce the highest *Knowledge* results, but at 15, 82% it produced the lowest ones for that particular game.

This would in principle present quite the conundrum, but I think that the answer to it is in a sense an obvious one. As I remarked way back in the introduction to this dissertation, not every single video game can facilitate a playthrough that will result in an LP channel, which will function as an affinity space proper, much like it would not do so in any other form. I am not necessarily talking about what Gee refers to as a "paradigmatic affinity space", which for him seem to be websites set on aiding people in figuring out the complexities of real-time strategy games (Gee, 1999). Rather, I mean to suggest that there is some threshold, which depending on their design particularities many titles cannot possibly pass, thus resulting in "Let's Play" channels and other cyberspaces that cannot be said to function as affinity spaces altogether. The focus of such spaces is essentially removed from learning in any form and instead set upon something else entirely. In cases such as those of RE7 one can reasonably imagine that viewer responses to the narrated gameplay are not unlike those of message boards dedicated to various popular TV series like for ex. "The Walking Dead", if we are to keep to the specific genre. Much like a well-made episode of that show, a well-made LP of a well-made straightforward horror or adventure game will surely happen to produce a higher number of entries of emotional nature in those online spaces, which accommodate social-semiotic interactions between viewers rather than the knowledge sharing ones characteristic of affinity spaces facilitating new literacies exchange. Indeed this is exactly what we observe in Odd's results for that game – an *Affect* ratio of nearly 30%, compared to the 16, 36% averaged by the other three streamers – instead of increased *Others* category responses in lieu of the low *Knowledge* category ones. This brings me to my third and final hypothesis – the inverse relationship between the *Knowledge* and *Others* categories.

The outcome here is narrowly related to the situation presented above, which means to say that the exception is due to the somewhat naively presumed one-dimensional dynamic between *Knowledge* and *Others*, which further presupposes a largely static role for the other two categories. And while that may well be the case for the LPs performed on Dark Souls, Deus Ex, and Nioh, it definitely is not for the Resident Evil 7 ones. There Christopher Odd's lowest in the group of four *Knowledge* result of 15, 82% is accompanied by the similarly lowest *Others* levels, which at 23, 83% stand decidedly lower than the 31, 85% average of the rest of the group. It will be interesting to see if there are some concrete triggers behind these numbers to be identified through the exploration of the streamers' performance profiles in the next chapter. For now it suffices to say that the results

have indeed allowed me to answer my first research question in the affirmative – there can indeed be observed a significant difference among affinity spaces that have emerged around playthroughs of the same game, and similarly significant difference can be witnessed within the same YT channel when working with different game titles. Furthermore the results have largely confirmed the several hypotheses suggested earlier in the text, while at the same time pointing to certain rigidity in the so-conceived system for coding and categorizing comment data that I utilized, which are to be rectified in its next iteration, if and when it is to be used in further research conducted along these lines. With that established, in the remaining chapters of this text I will focus on hopefully uncovering the exact reasons behind these differences.

CHAPTER SEVEN: EXPLORING TYPES OF DISCOURSE AND PATHS OF INFLUENCE

In this chapter I return to the comment sections of the four Dark Souls LPs to investigate the various types of discourses practiced in these affinity spaces and how those influence the LP content itself. In doing so I will focus the reader's attention on any emergent themes and what they tell us about the users of that space and furthermore, with respect to elaboration and sharing discourses in particular, which epistemic activities are applicable in these LP settings and what is their utility.

As was established in the methodology section, the thematic content analysis that resulted in the categories of emergent CFT codes by means of which the comment section data was being structured throughout this chapter has also provided me with the main building blocks over which thematic discourse analysis could be next applied in order to answer the second research question of this thesis. The de/reconstruction of these several categories results in a coding scheme that to some extent tends to overlap with the comment function tag framework. Things however change rather significantly once we move beyond the basic categorization, perhaps with the exception of the Knowledge category, which due to its focus sees a somewhat frictionless transfer from CFTs to epistemic activities.

Of course this cannot be the case for the other discourse types and the chief reason for this lies within the nature of the analytical model of epistemic activity. More specifically the approach postulates that for an action taken within an affinity space (or some other online user-interaction-enabled setting) to be seen as part of a discourse applied by the user, that move needs to facilitate the advancement of "inquiry in reflective, indexical, and contextual ways" within that same space (Zenios, 2010). Therefore any expressions of emotional reactions to moments of gameplay, streamer

attitude, lines of dialogue, commentary, and so forth (be it situational or otherwise), cannot possibly be interpreted as such moves, meaning that the contents of the "Affect" category, while constituting a type of discourse in their own right house no such activities. Even though connected to the sharing of personal experience that lies at the core of any form of informal learning, this type of comments does not go beyond revealing the emotional state of the user in relation to the viewed content. Similarly, while comments relevant to the "Evaluation" category play a very important role in an affinity space of this type, they do not function as epistemic activities.

Furthermore, as the reader might already suspect, the fourth CFT category "Others" clearly cannot correspond to a discourse type when taken as a whole. Instead it provides us with several separate cases to look at. Firstly, two of the six tags housed within do seem to reflect a certain kind of epistemic activity, labelled by Tohill (2016) as "offering resources". These are comments which deal with establishing connections between the given affinity space to various external resources via either hyperlinks, or by discussing certain games or streamers. However, I felt it was inappropriate to call it "Others as resources for enhancing personal understanding" as the purpose of such comments was never really related to "enhancing personal understanding". Nevertheless, insofar this input still represents a discourse type I chose to label it "network-building" as to reflect their aforementioned function, but drop the epistemic activity element, since it did not advance inquiry in any way.

Then we have statements, which facilitate dialogue between the users of the space, or produce some kind of user-authored text for others to read. Within the CFT framework such comments were labelled with the "viewer exchange fragments" and "fan fiction" tags, but when interpreting them as a discourse I will borrow the term "social cohesion" from Kimberly L. Tohill's research as it is indeed the exact same role that they perform here, despite the occasional lack of a positive connotation, which was emphasized in her research. Namely, these are "social or colloquial comments […] informal in nature and may or may not relate to the initial focus of the discussion" (Tohill, 2016, p. 44).

And finally, we have the "off-topic/irrelevant" and "nondescript/unknown" tags, i.e. those comments, which cannot be properly understood within the context of the affinity space. It is indeed possible that some of these artefacts are results of other directly or indirectly related comments having been removed by users (or the YouTube platform itself, sometimes together with the users) prior to the process of data collection, which would effectively render them meaningless. Be as it may such comments are not representative of any type of discourse and do not constitute any form of meaning-making, so I have ignored them completely in this chapter. In order to illustrate the final state of classification more clearly, I have compiled Table 1, partially adapted from, and shown here

alongside Arvaja's and Tohill's coding schemes, with any typically associated CFTs added in the third column per the respective discourse type / epistemic activity.

Discourse Type	Epistemic Activity	CFTs	Description
Affective	n/a	[b1],[b2]	Users provide input revealing their emotional reaction or expectations to gameplay events.
Evaluation	n/a	[a1],[a2], [a3],[a4], [a5]	Users evaluate (positively or negatively) the streamer's actions and performance during gameplay, or the technical aspects of the channels' content.
Elaboration	Providing advice and know-how	[c1],[c2], [c6]	Users provide information intended to: answer a question explicitly stated by the streamer; help the streamer address a gameplay situation they perceive to need their input; make the streamer aware of alternative possibilities during gameplay.
	Asking clarification question	[c5]	Users ask for clarification or present an alternative, related example that builds upon the original question or situation.
	Answering a clarification question	[c6]	Users answer or respond to a request for clarification.
	Reasoned further	[c1],[c2], [c6]	Users provide additional support or information for a question or response.
	Lore knowledge	[c1],[c2]	Users offer knowledge related to the lore of the game-generator.
	Challenging other's ideas	n/a	Users disagree directly with advice provided by others and/or correct them.
Sharing	Giving one's own example	[c4]	Users provide personal evidence to support their position or provide further information.
	Agreeing	n/a	Users agree with a previously stated position or comment.
	Sharing criticism	n/a	Users share their criticism of a posed situation or view presented.
Let's Play Specific (LPS)	Acknowledging personal learning	[c3]	Users specify what they have learned about the game by means of the LP.
	Making a demand	[c5]	Users make requests addressed directly to the streamer.
	Speculating	[c7]	Users make hypotheses with no factual basis.
Network-building	n/a	[d1],[d2]	Users make references to other games or LPs.
Social Cohesion	n/a	[d4],[d6]	Users make social comments between themselves (personal or channel-wide) that are informal in nature.

Table 1: The discourse types and their respective epistemic activities applicable to the affinity space of a YouTube Let's Play channel
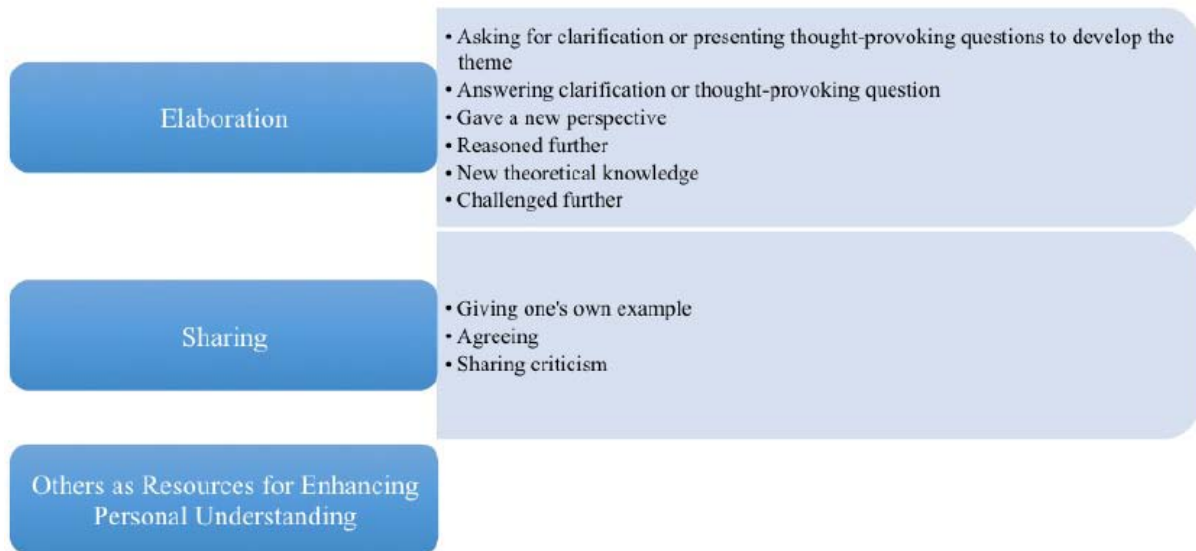
Figure 3: Arvaja's original coding scheme (Arvaja, 2012, in Tohill, 2016)
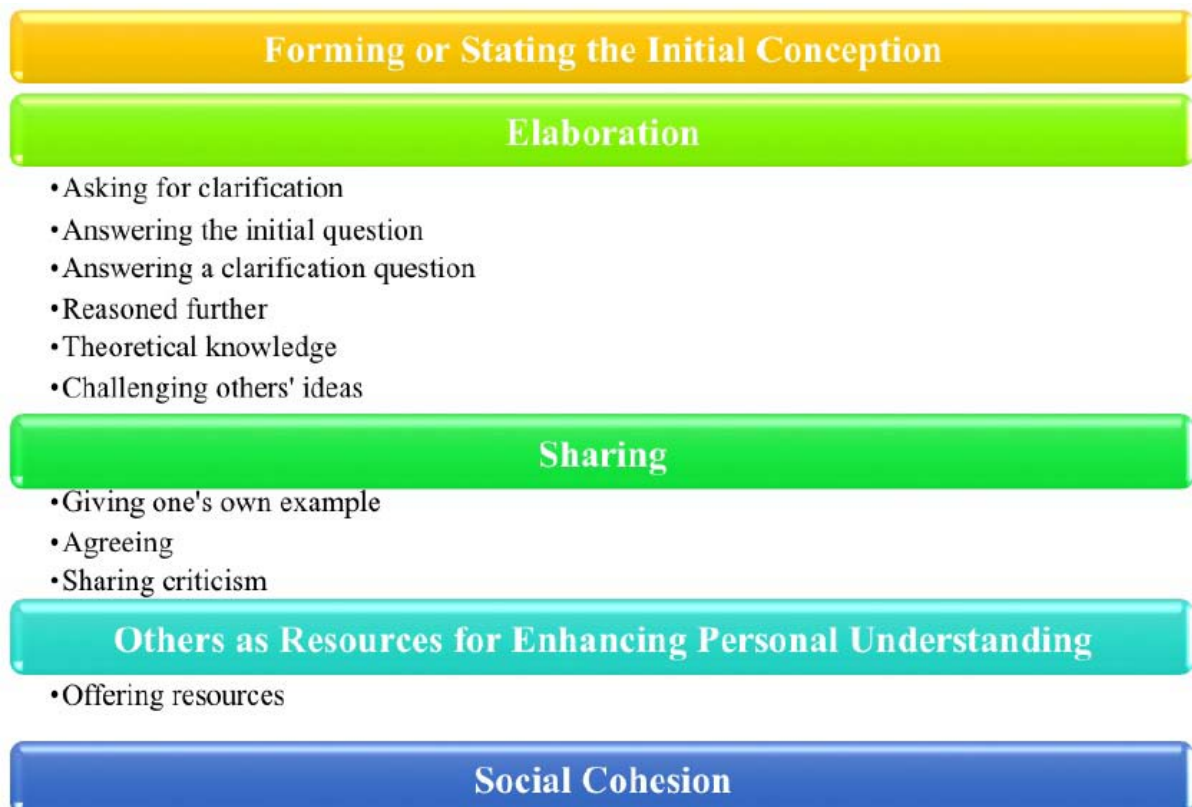
Figure 4: Tohill's updated coding scheme (Tohill, 2016)

With all this in mind let us proceed to examining how these types of discourses are being applied by the users of these affinity spaces to influence the "Let's Play" content. In doing so I will be covering somewhat familiar grounds, but this time looking through a different lens as I seek to map

the explicit and implicit ways by which the audience affects the content produced in YouTube's LP channels. As I have specified in my original presentation of the research questions driving this work, I wanted this part of the project to have a descriptive and as such – qualitative character, rather than the quantitative angle utilized in the previous chapter. Thus for every playthrough I will only bring up comments, which are representative of a pattern that can be observed within the affinity space, or in other words variations of a theme that multiple users seem to subscribe to. Statistics will be used sparsely, mostly to emphasize a certain point rather than articulate it comprehensively. And since I am interested in how a given discourse is applied to achieve the aforementioned influence, I will begin with the type most explicit in this particular respect – evaluation.

7.1 Evaluation discourse and emergent themes

I spoke earlier of "Let's Play" videos sharing certain traits with those of live performances. Indeed this parallel becomes much more obvious when discussing the live streaming of video games, but is very much present in the asynchronous exchanges characteristic of these episodic uploads as well. Nowhere is that more obvious than with comments, which seek to applaud the content creator for their work, much like one who enthusiastically bursts into clapping and cheering when the artist they like shows up on stage, or begins a new song, etc. These generally supportive comments often have little to do with the specific episode one can find them under, and many are way too basic to qualify as something more than said applause (for ex. "*Great vids*!"). However some do tend to focus on one or more elements of the LP content the author wants to emphasize their personal approval of, and these are the ones I am interested in. Let us take a look at a few examples from each Dark Souls playthrough and break them down to their constituent parts.

> *So glad you're playing my favourite series Chris and doing a great job.*
> *I pray at the shrine of sir Odd everyday*
>
> *73ScottybBOD*

In this case the user has provided three key points, which the content creator will take into consideration upon reading the comment. First, the game in question is their favourite and this user will gladly watch more playthroughs of it or other similar games. Next, whatever the way of playing the streamer is exhibiting it is "the right way" and they should keep at it without changing anything. Finally, the Souls-inspired metaphor comprising the second sentence means to say that the user is a regular viewer who follows the LP's uploads on a daily basis.

Finally caught up and subbed! Just wanted to say I've been really enjoying watching you play , it's making the wait for Dark Souls 2 that much easier.

Love your meticulous nature, it kind of irks me when I watch someone run through a game just to see the ending, specially when it's a great game worth exploring.

Anyway, keep at it, and can't wait to see more.

Also, mimics are assholes.

mhbed5

This one features multiple types of discourse (indeed the majority of comments do serve manifold purpose) as it also refers to a different game (Dark Souls 2) than the one that serves as the generator of this affinity space and furthermore expresses an emotional reaction towards a specific gameplay moment (the mimic). Nevertheless, the main focus of this post is evaluation and it reveals a couple of important things. First, it specifies that this is a new viewer who has only recently found the channel and had to catch up to the current upload and subscribed to receive notifications for further updates. Moreover the user reveals that they have seen a number of playthroughs of the game in question and they prefer this one compared to others due to the "meticulous" character of the player's approach. Also similar to the previous example this comment portrays a person who will likely watch regularly this LP and others of such nature by the same author from here on out.

I did not choose these statements at random as they are in fact representative of a certain theme and when taken together such comments reveal something rather crucial about the audience of Odd and Kay. Namely, these are people who have spent a lot of time already playing Dark Souls and watching videos of others doing it, sometimes in different ways. For example the sentence "*One of my favorite parts of blind LPs of this game*" found in another comment under Odd's playthrough, clearly points to the fact that the user has seen at least a couple of other "blind" LPs and at least one "not blind" such series. Considering the fact that an LP of Dark Souls can be anywhere between 50 and a 100 hours – the blind ones tend to be closer to the latter number – we are talking here of hundreds of hours of time sank into viewing gameplay of a title the user surely knows by heart.

It is then no accident that these users appreciate careful gameplay and detailed exploration, because these are things the game itself rewards in those who do not play it in a superficial manner (see 5.1). Therefore, by applying supportive evaluation discourse these users act like conduits for the very same reward mechanisms through reinforcing the necessity of such playstyle and continuously (from the perspective of the content creator) reaffirming it by praising its qualities in the streamers they have recognized these same characteristics in. And since such people have most certainly a very thorough knowledge of the game's content and its many systems this also goes to significant lengths

to explain why more knowledge transactions can be found within the affinity spaces of the LPs of people who demonstrate that they learn from the game while playing it and do not skim over one or more elements of its content.

Furthermore, it is telling that on multiple occasions there are comments present (specifically on Odd's LP – Kay seems to be a star player along those lines, as I found no such input) that actually criticise the streamer for not being careful enough, or lacking attention to detail, as in the following examples:

Surviving the titanite demons was kind of impressive, but how the hell can you have such terrible spatial awareness? At 25:34 the door you needed to take was literally right in front of you, taking up maybe 1/3 of your screen. I'm not mad about missing illusory walls, but... really dude?

Adu767

Okay you got the Sens bonfire, sorry jumped the gun a bit there but still. Be more observant and pay attention to detail. This cannot be stressed enough.

Anothis Flame

While being critical in their approach comments such as these ultimately aim to propagate the exact same goals and values as those previously discussed. In both cases the users' application of evaluation discourse simultaneously reflects and shapes the activity performed in the affinity space (Steinkuehler, 2004). This is done by bringing the principal values of Dark Souls' gameplay into focus on one hand, and pressuring the streamer when they fail (or applauding them when they succeed) to perform at whatever level the user sees as appropriate, on the other. Naturally the inherent contradiction in these points of view does not escape other members of the space either:

So, let me get this straight -- you managed to reach Sen's Fortress' bonfire in a blind playthrough dying only twice in the process? Not sure what's more amazing, that or the fact that some people were complaining about your supposed incompetence.

Mrtyugata

But if this is indeed the case than we should be able to identify a theme in the comments of the playthrough that scored poorly in terms of frequency of knowledge transactions, which paints the audience of said playthrough in a different light. Do bear in mind of course that when I speak of any channel's audience that is not meant to be some gross generalization that puts every single user of that affinity space under the same banner. Rather, such claims only concern themes that have made themselves apparent in a given comment section and as such can be seen as a recognizable trait of the channel's audience as a whole.

Just such a theme emerges from within the evaluation discourse as applied in the comment section of Masterkizz' LP. Namely it appears that what is characteristic of his audience is to not have played Dark Souls at all. In fact next to comments, which state that the user intends to purchase the game following their experience with said LP, there are others that would not play such a title in general and cite that as a reason for watching the playthrough in the first place. While no such comments whatsoever were to be found under either Odd's or Kay's videos , this theme can be witnessed in approximately 10% of the comments made under Masterkizz's content that deal with its evaluation. At the same time only one user has identified themselves as having viewed multiple LPs of the title. Consider the following statements:

> *Yay :D*
>
> *Love these, man. I really like watching a commentary of a game that I wouldn't normally play. Thanks!!*
>
> > *Eric Duarte*
>
> *Man, I am loving this series. It's great just listening to you play and your reactions to things.*
>
> *I've never played this game, so I'm certainly no expert, but it seems to have tons of paths you can go at any one time. […]*
>
> *Keep 'em coming, MK!*
>
> > *OnyxZephyr333*

What these signify is that it is the player and not the game that is instrumental in attracting audience for such an LP. Whereas users in Odd's and Kay's spaces frequently evoke their dedication to all things Dark Souls, *including* these YouTube channels, Masterkizz' audience more often than not evokes its dedication to the streamer himself, rather than the title he is playing. As a result there are fewer people who are knowledgeable of the game taking part in the affinity space on average and thus fewer knowledge transactions taking place overall. It is quite possible that the lower the volume of knowledge transactions in a given YouTube channel, the weaker the potential of any given game-generator to generate an affinity space out of this particular online environment. Whatever the exact reasons – some of those may become evident in the next chapter – it is clear that some online spaces of this type never really reach the critical mass necessary to actualize themselves as affinity spaces, which is of course a different case entirely when compared to processes such as affinity space deterioration (Gee, 2005). But for now at least this shall remain a topic for further research.

Despite this, as seen above there is no shortage of supportive and positive evaluation for Masterkizz brought forward by his audience, but it is just aimed in different directions. All streamers are praised for delivering entertaining content, but what is considered entertaining clearly varies

across viewers. There are a number of themes relevant here, but perhaps the single most telling comparison would be courtesy of certain affect discourse comments and more specifically those containing explicit references to laughter as reaction to the gameplay. Even though Odd's episodes feature well over double the amount of comments when juxtaposed with Masterkizz' (517 to 233), laughing has been the topic of an user's input only twice, whereas there are twelve such instances for the latter's gameplay segment. Upon taking into account that most of those comments do not even refer to a specific accidentally comedic moment in the episodes, but rather to the LP in general, it becomes evident that Masterkizz' viewers do not draw particularly sharp lines between "fun" and "funny" when they pursue entertaining content.

In summary, with this section I explored some of the ways in which the evaluation discourse characteristic of many comments within these affinity spaces may affect the streamer owning the LP channel and consecutively the content released in it. Some of said ways revolve around direct praise or criticism, while others are more implied rather than shared outright as they may reveal the user's personal values and motivations, or various aspects of the culture surrounding the game-generator. While evaluation is generally conducted along similar lines in all channels, in the cases of Kay and Odd's LPs certain themes in their comment sections diverge substantially when compared to other such themes that can be witnessed among Masterkizz' viewers. Note that these themes are not unique to evaluation discourse comments, and can also be observed in elaboration, sharing and LPS discourse input.

7.2 Thematic hotspots and the "backseating" dilemma

Throughout the previous section one has probably noticed that I have not at all referred to the fourth YouTube channel otherwise subject of this research. The reason for this is that what most stood out in terms of a theme in the comment section of KineticGTR's Sen Fortress episodes is in fact related to an issue that ends up being of paramount importance when discussing such LP channels as affinity spaces. And that would be the dilemma of "backseating"[19]. This colloquial term refers to a certain subset of user input, which while informative and a proper knowledge transaction in its own right, is either done in an undesirable manner, or concerns the kind of topic that ultimately renders it unwanted by the streamer (such comments were tagged as spoilers in the previous chapter). This

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[19] The widespread usage of the actual term is somewhat more recent than KineticGTR's LP. While it has existed at the time it was not used at all in the comment section of the episode the hotspot emerged in. Nevertheless, since it is referring to exactly the same concept and for the sake of convenience, I have adopted it in this text.

effectively means that each creator of "Let's Play" content has imposed certain boundaries on what their viewers can advise them to do in a given game. However these boundaries are porous and malleable, since they do also depend on the game-generator of the affinity space and indeed – on the audience itself. Like the rest of the culture in the making that is characteristic of any such space what will be considered an act of "backseating" in a given channel is a function of the affinity space as a whole, as it is dependent on the interactions between all the elements involved.

How said function is being processed is something I would have dedicated decidedly more attention to, had I known of its existence in advance and that it will turn out to be such an important moment. But in the right here and now we will have to settle for a theoretical example discussing its underlying dynamics. Some video games require more knowledge to be obtained in order for the player to achieve certain goals. However some players might view these goals as optional and not interesting enough to pursue during the playthrough. But then they might change their mind if they are made aware that their audience wants to see said goals attained. So they may allow more input on topics that will help them complete these particular tasks. This will in turn likely affect the type of knowledge transactions people see as appropriate to make in other titles featured on this channel, and furthermore how they will view what other users input reads like or is concerned with. And so on and so forth.

Therefore how "backseating" is being defined in a given affinity space ends up having a very complex relationship with the LP performance profile as I aim to define it in the next chapter. It is easy to see how some people will withhold information instead of sharing it in the affinity space if they believe it to be "inappropriate" based on their impression of the streamer. For example some players will prefer to figure out the finer details of a game's mechanics by themselves, others will focus more on the story. Depending on what they want to set their own minds on doing will affect how detailed an user input they tolerate on a given topic, but conversely that same input will define what they see as important for their audience and thus their own performance as a content creator. Sadly my approach to developing the profile with respect to this thesis will not allow me to explore its parameters as they relate to the "backseating" dilemma just yet and it will have to be delegated to another research project. For now let us go back to KineticGTR's Dark Souls LP and how this topic ended up dominating the evaluation discourse as applied in its comment sections.

Apparently over the course of the episodes preceding the segment I have chosen for data collection, the evaluation discourse centred on KineticGTR's performance has grown predominantly critical and – at least in his personal view – not in a constructive way. Rather he perceived it as "backseating", whereby he is being flat out told how he should approach the gameplay instead of

the users trying to augment his play in a sensible manner. As a consequence the streamer directly addresses the situation in one of the videos, explaining that he is considering taking a break from the series for the time being. Naturally this event has prompted a lot of users to express their views on the matter in the comment section, which results in a significant percent of all evaluation discourse input to revolve around this particular issue. This of course does not mean that other themes do no emerge from the thematic discourse analysis, but they do not differ much from those previously discussed. The following comment provides a good example of said discussion and brings up several important points:

Im in the excact same position your in branfreeze :P marathoned the playlist, only to be like 'why is he not posting anymore?' reading these comments telling me why :(i'll be looking forward to you starting to upload again kinetic! :) Im quite sure, there's more people like me, who enjoy the playthrough, but who does not comment :) so just because it may seem overwhelming with negativity, im quite sure there are alot of people enjoying it ALOT as well :) keep up the good work kinetic!

Frischhenriksen

The user correctly points out that the presence of negative comments even if they appear relatively widespread does not paint the whole picture. As a number of studies have shown there are various reasons why the threshold required for someone to reply with a negative connotation in computer-mediated environment seems significantly lowered when compared to one's behaviour in their "real life" surroundings, even though the consequences from such practices are real enough (Turkle, 2011). But this is more often than not a case of a vocal minority and silent majority (Gao et al., 2015), which the streamer can easily gauge from the additional metrics YouTube provides them with (even if you only refer to the likes/dislike ratio for this episode it is at the time of writing over 90 to 1 positive). This is why it is important for a streamer to attempt and engage their audience in a proactive relationship whereby they can contribute to the exchanges within the affinity space. Like any other online community the more the participants are passive the more negativity will stand out and can potentially repel those actually looking to partake in a constructive manner:

I support you Kinetic do what you want to do. Thats what video games are about! I recently started playing Dark Souls and been having a blast. Iv also been looking at other peoples vids more for direction since this game only gives vague hits. But even watching the other videos Im surprised by some of the elitist comments on how people should play Dark Souls. Its no wonder to me if you want to take a break.

UnAnimatedMan

The concentration of responses on a certain topic is not that unique either however. While it is not something characteristic of every single episode of an LP, such "hotspots" can be witnessed on a fairly regular basis. Their appearance can be owed to comments made by the streamer on video, like above, or related to a significant gameplay event, like the first encounter with a "mimic", which takes place in the Sen Fortress area and seems to be something of a fan favourite. Things like the latter is more likely to fall in the "Affect" category, as a "cool moment" people want to see and react to others experiencing it themselves, though some will also share their personal experience in the comments.

In the explored part of Odd's playthrough by far the most significant such "hotspot" is due to a question where he asks his viewers directly about something. More specifically he shares that he is considering killing one of the key NPCs in Dark Souls – Andre the blacksmith. Of course when he is doing that he cannot possibly know of the role this NPC plays for certain mechanics of the game, as these mechanics have only been hinted at when the player first encounters said blacksmith. Rather Odd's seems to be thinking out loud whether such characters "drop" items when killed and whether it is possible to do so in the first place. Naturally the mere suggestion of such an act lights up a match in the comment section where one can find numerous instances of advice on the topic, running the whole gamut from the simple and imperative:

DO NOT KILL BLACKSMITHS!!!

<div align="right">*SiLenT366*</div>

Through substantiated advice:

NEVER, EVER, EVER kill an NPC unless you absolutely know what you're doing. Yes, some of them become obsolete later or give nice drops but unless you're 100 % sure you're not gonna need the guy for something later. For instance Andre is possibly one of the most useful NPCs in the entire game and if you kill him you'll lose the ability to upgrade weapons a certain way.

<div align="right">*Pirat*</div>

To 200-words pieces, which perhaps unavoidably begin to skirt, or outright break through, the borders of "backseating". It is the kind of situation where the streamer has to accept that their own input provokes the release of information in the affinity space, which they would otherwise prefer not to know at this point in time. But then again they also have no way of knowing that their idea is so "radical" in the context of the game-generator. This case illustrates rather well how fluid the dynamics of (re)defining "backseating" are, and indeed how open-ended the concept itself is, as an instance of the code of conduct of the affinity space.

To summarize, in this part I reviewed the emergence of certain thematic "hotspots" within the three main types of discourse that can be encountered in affinity spaces of the YouTube channel variety. For a topic to qualify for the title in question it needs to have at least 5% of all the comments referring to it in one form or another, so that it can be said to stand out of the rest of the themes in the comment section. According to the analyzed data sample these occur following three types of events: certain comments made by the streamers may provoke the discussion (Odd and Andre's case); a specific event during gameplay might trigger the audience's reaction (the mimic in all four LPs); or due to an user-applied discourse at some earlier point, the streamer may bring up a given topic, which in turn lead to the emergence of a hotspot (KineticGTR's "backseating" complaints).

Each of the aforementioned cases refocuses some of the affinity space's attention onto a certain type of discourse. The proposed killing of an NPC yields mostly elaboration responses since substantiation of the claim is required and even without it, the advice not to do it still constitutes a knowledge transaction. Next the mimic's first appearance and attempt "to dine" on the unfortunate players, produces largely affective discourse input, though depending on the playthrough this might skew towards elaboration / sharing as there seem to be lots of tips and tricks to be shared over that particular creature. And finally, the "backseating" problem that KineticGTR has, results in his users engaging in evaluation discourse. Of course it is purely accidental that each trigger has produced a specific discourse, as I see no reason why these cannot be shuffled around. Nor should we expect a reason for any given "hotspot" to evoke comments falling squarely or predominantly into a certain discourse type. All of these correlations most likely come down to the used data sample.

7.3 Elaboration, Sharing, and "Let's Play" Specific (LPS) discourses

Before all else let me define the discourse types featured in this part and more specifically how do the definitions of the former two types translate from the original settings they were conceptualized within to the one I am investigating here, since we are no longer dealing with my own concepts. All notions explained here are listed in the tables provided in the beginning of the chapter, which the reader can readily refer to.

As its name implies, elaboration discourse is used to continue developing the main topic or the overall theme of a discussion, which in the context of the comment section of an LP is the episode people are commenting under. Maarit Arvaja (2012) has described the following six epistemic activities as its main constituent parts: asking for clarification or presenting a thought-

provoking question to develop the theme, answering clarification or thought provoking question, gave a new perspective, reasoned further, new theoretical knowledge, and challenging others' ideas. According to the scholar, these epistemic activities represent the ways in which those partaking in the discussion have expanded or increased their personal knowledge via interacting with others, while utilizing the aforementioned actions (Arvaja, 2012).

Meanwhile, sharing discourse refers to those experiences or ideas on any given phenomena that the participants find themselves sharing (Arvaja, 2012). The researcher observed this taking place by means of three epistemic activities, which allowed the members of the space to achieve agreement on a certain theme, be it in an affirmative or a critical fashion, and also draw parallels between their personal ideas and experiences. These were termed: giving one's own example, agreeing, and sharing criticism. In these ways, the practice of sharing discourse encouraged people to stay engaged and build upon theirs and others' thoughts (Arvaja, 2012).

Building upon Arvaja's ideas then, Kimberly Tohill (2016) revised the discourse definitions some as to fit with her own data. Most importantly she separated the first epistemic activity into two specific types of performing inquiry and delivering answers: the first being the initial question or situation as posed by the member who has initiated a given thread (i.e. what is colloquially known on the internet as an OP – original poster) and those who reply directly to them, while the second refers to any follow-up question seeking clarification and related to this original topic. The other major alteration Tohill made to the coding scheme was removing the "gave a new perspective" epistemic activity as redundant, since in her view "each response provided gave a new perspective in the sense that it was not exactly the same as any previous response" (Tohill, 2016, p. 46).

As I said the former change is the more important one, since the type of affinity space examined here does not have threads and thus no original posters to speak of. Rather the OP and thus the topic of discussion is the current LP episode, meaning that all knowledge transactions directed at the streamer as an author of that episode must be understood as Tohill's "answering the initial question" epistemic activity. Naturally, the name no longer makes sense, so I utilized the "providing advice and know-how" label from my relevant CFT codes, while removing the lore and correction parts of its original definition, since those now apply to other epistemic activities.

Finally, the particularities of the context of this affinity space necessitated the introduction of another type of discourse altogether, which I labelled "Let's Play" Specific discourse, since the three epistemic activities that belong to it – acknowledging personal learning, making a demand, and speculating – all serve very concrete functions, which may not fully translate to other affinity spaces.

Now as I mentioned before, the template of thematic discourse analysis focused on locating the types of discourse applied in online spaces of learning is widely used, however its application is not uniform across settings. The discussion board that for ex. Arvaja (2012) developed her approach for is characterized by some very different dynamics compared to the affinity spaces that I am focusing on here and, being a teachers' community of practice, it has a very different raison d'être. For the need for knowledge-sharing to arise in that context it is necessary for an user to bring forward an issue or a question as to get a thread started and a potential discussion going. But this is most definitely not the case when a YouTube channel is considered as a setting for knowledge exchange. By far the biggest driver for sharing of knowledge within this type of affinity space seems to be the streamer's performance and their conversation-like interaction with the game-generator, the key factors behind which will hopefully be uncovered in the next chapter.

This is to say that some existing content is always a prerequisite for the wheels powering the affinity space to start turning, which is *not* the game-generator that would otherwise serve as the convergence point for an affinity space to emerge. For illustrative purposes one can perhaps imagine the ongoing process akin to a political debate on TV (admittedly not the best analogy) whereby two or more figures are involved in a dialogue, which the viewer is also invested in. The exchanges made during the debate frequently tend to provoke some viewers to "talk back" to the TV screen when they feel they have to point out omissions, or further the arguments of one of the speakers, cast doubt over various claims being made, etc. In a similar vein, there is no need for explicit issues to be raised by the player in order to have their audience engaged, though they do occasionally do that as well and depending on the question(s), or statement(s) a large portion of the comments under a certain video may indeed end up being dedicated to those (like the "killing the blacksmith" topic in Odd's playthrough, which was discussed earlier).

Once knowledge transactions do begin to manifest within the space however, the process of categorizing and analyzing those in discourse terms is not so different from the teachers' discussion board. The notable exception of course being the goal of the entire endeavor, since on the board each thread has one or more issues, which once resolved (also in those cases where no solution is found) sink into the depths of the space, only to occasionally resurface if another individual has a similar problem and some search engine has directed them to those coordinates. What the goal of a "Let's Play" series is, within the context of a multitude of individuals trying to alter its course in an asynchronous manner, and to what extent one can even be identified, is a much more complicated question that will eventually become the topic of a different research. Indeed once completed an LP also loses the visibility it has had while being an ongoing series and the frequency of interactions

within the space does slow down considerably. However, it is important to remember that each LP is an affinity space with its own generator, while the YouTube channel itself is more of a cluster of such spaces. It does make for a peculiar situation where a single playthrough is somehow positioned "between" the thread and the discussion board itself once parallels between the two online settings for informal learning are drawn.

Yet again, despite those structural and functional differences, the approach to discourse in both settings remains the same. Essentially whenever a user of the affinity space engages with it by means of elaboration or sharing they perform one or more epistemic activities via their input, which are those steps that help advancing any given inquiry that is being perceived to be in need of such contributions. As explained previously these inquiries need not be explicitly raised by the streamer or their viewers. Rather they make themselves apparent within the context of narrated gameplay, which portrays the ongoing conversation between player and game. If I am to describe the process in ecological psychology terms, all viewers have developed their own effectivity sets based on their prior experience with the game-generator, which allow them to potentially recognize affordances in the observed segments of narrated gameplay and act accordingly. Their acts take the form of the aforementioned epistemic activities, which for this type of affinity space come in the shape of one or more of the categories listed in Table 1. And since taking any of the information shared by some of these means into account will certainly affect the practices of the streamer from this point onwards, it is also safe to say that certain epistemic activities further double as paths of influence onto the channel's content. In the next couple of pages then I will take a look at which ones do so and how.

Before we head there though, one final explanation is needed as to why I have omitted a certain epistemic activity and included another. In both Arvaja's original coding scheme (2012) and the version developed by Tohill (2016) the researchers had made a decidedly clear distinction between elaboration and sharing discourse, with the category "others as resources for enhancing personal understanding" playing a more minor in terms of the spread of its usage role. Their approach was dictated by the fact that the learning spaces they examined, while informal were nevertheless thematically focused discussion settings – Arvaja's was a philosophy course, while Tohill's one was dedicated to teaching. In both of these cases there is a rather significant theoretical resource, which all of the participants were likely to draw on (especially in the former space) and accordingly within the elaboration discourse the authors have listed a "(new) theoretical knowledge" epistemic activity – something clearly inapplicable here.

However there is in fact a type of knowledge that fits this description in the context of a video-game LP and that is the "lore" of the game-generator, which the users may have acquired

from the game itself, or procured it from another source. Hence contributing it to the affinity space constitutes a type of epistemic activity, which in a sense replaces the theoretical one in elaboration discourse insofar that even if the users contribute their own knowledge it is not the kind that is firmly rooted into their personal experiences. Admittedly, not all game-generators utilize the type of lore that requires it to be a subject of discussion, let alone analysis, but FromSoftware's titles[20] and others inspired by these certainly do. And since this part of my research revolves strictly around Dark Souls, I had to account for that detail.

Next I will go through all the epistemic activities utilized by the users of LP YouTube channel-type affinity spaces to practice elaboration, sharing, and LPS discourses in that order, to explain how they work in more detail. More specifically, I am interested in which ones of these function as paths for the audience to influence the channel's content and how.

7.3.1 Providing advice and know-how

Within elaboration discourse being by far the most widespread and therefore important epistemic activity observed in all Dark Souls LPs is the one of providing practical advice, or otherwise relevant to the game's world and systems, information. As explained earlier this epistemic activity replaces "Answering initial question" from Tohill's coding scheme, with the caveat here being that such a question needs not be explicitly enunciated by the streamer. When they do though, few associated comments tend to quote the question they are answering (most do not):

'How can you tell if a fog wall will lead to a boss?'
You can't. That's the point.

LordOmberus

This is a category that houses most comments tagged in the previous chapter with the [c1] and [c2] CFTs. These were put together, because while they do refer to functionally different types of knowledge within the context of the gameplay, these types are still articulated within the boundaries of the same user epistemic activity. Indeed many comments incorporate both types of knowledge transactions. Let us take a look at the example below.

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[20] An extremely popular YouTube channel for FromSoft's lore is https://www.youtube.com/user/VaatiVidya, which started with the first Dark Souls game and over the years seems to have become the main affinity space for discussions related to all their titles, where most of the community's knowledge on the subject stems from.

[…] If you have some hard time gauging the distance from you and the swinging axes in Sen's fortress, watch the ground! Developers was nice enough to put some marks right above each axe, giving you a landmark to know where it's safe and where it's not.

You can also move the camera above your character, it's easier to evaluate the distance from that point of view ;)

GenLiu

This particular comment happens to illustrate the difference between these two types of knowledge transactions very well as there is one of each type packaged neatly one after the other, and furthermore both concern the exact same issue. Both follow the same structure of suggesting an action and explaining the result of said action, which in either case means acquiring the knowledge necessary to solve the issue at hand. The first advice is to utilize information present within the game's world, while the second suggests using a game's core technical system – namely position the third person view camera in a certain way – to achieve the same result. Both of these are elements of the internal grammar of the game-generator. However the two associated transactions do not have equal value, since using the camera in the proposed manner makes it impossible for the player to account for any projectiles coming their way, or discern what is to come immediately after the axe they are about to move through – both downsides, which the former advice does not share.

So how is it that the users of these affinity spaces utilize these epistemic practices to affect the trajectory of the consumed content? Unlike with evaluation discourse input here it is obviously not a case of being pro or con with respect to the streamer's actions and narration during gameplay. Instead it is about introducing alternatives to said actions or choices in similar situations whenever they occur in future instalments of the "Let's Play" in question, or creating new types of situations altogether. The question then becomes how does the user decide whether the necessity exists for such alternatives in the first place? Let us return to the example above.

It could be that the player cannot "gauge the distance" between their character and the trap in their way. Note that the conditional is embedded within the very beginning of the comment. This means that the user is not certain whether the know-how they are providing is in fact required in any sense of that word. However they must have perceived either hesitation or mistakes during such gameplay situations occur at least once (as this extract actually refers to a moment discussed in the coming chapter, I can confirm that it is one instance of each) in order to provide the aforementioned input. Since as discussed earlier a viewer who is also a player has their own effectivity set that they (sub)consciously apply whenever gameplay situations that they are familiar with arise they recognize

affordances that may or may not be available to the streamer, which then provokes the making of a knowledge transaction addressing that affordance.

This is of course one example of how such transactions take place as some may be provided as a matter of principle, as in "I think everyone should know that...", while others might not take into account the player's performance (for ex. some people may provide the information above even if no hesitation or mistakes have occurred), and still others may contribute knowledge seemingly "at random". Let us consider the following comment out of context:

"*Do a quality build (strenght and dex)*".

Aster

It could be that the user simply wants to see the streamer's character developed in a certain way, because this is how they like to play through the game. But it could also be that the player has had trouble deciding between the two main attributes of strength and dexterity (each enabling higher performance with a certain subset of weapons) up to this point of the LP and are now in a situation, which would make a quality build viable, because of their unknowing choices. Cases like the latter can also be underscored by the player's own narration, where they ponder the issue out loud in some depth (as is the situation with Odd's playthrough where the comment is from). But it could also be a streamer's uttering made in passing, something along the lines of "I don't know if I should go for option A or B", which signifies doubt. And even if they simply proceed with one of their options without ever looking back, it will nevertheless portray hesitation no different to the "gauging the distance" example, which will then potentially invite the appropriate knowledge transaction(s) from one or more viewers who have witness that scene.

Now let us go back to the quality build example. Of course on a "blind" playthrough it would be impossible for the player to know that such an approach is even possible, i.e. that there is a subset of weapons designed as part of the game-generator's internal grammar to be most effective by increasing both the strength and dexterity character attributes, let alone that it has a specially designated name within the community – quality build. Concepts such as this do not exist within the game itself; rather they are emergent elements of an external grammar shared across most, if not all, affinity space generated by the same game, and produced in reaction to that game-generator's internal grammar.

Now that the player is aware of said element however, it opens many new potential paths for their LP. They may inquire about the particularities of doing such a build in the comment section (provided that other users have not already filled in those blanks, which in the case of Odd's LP they

have[21]), or while recording a latter episode, or cross the boundaries of the affinity space and use the term in a search engine. Either way they will potentially learn a lot for the game's internal grammar, which in turn will likely influence their choice of gear, which will then affect the kind of situations arising during gameplay, which will further alter what kind of input the audience is going to consider sharing to the affinity space.

Figure 5: The "Let's Play" YouTube channel-specific interaction loop of affinity space grammar modification

The resulting loop of knowledge-driven interactions between audience input, player agency, gameplay situations, and LP content is portrayed in the figure below and is effectively the YouTube channel-specific variation of the internal grammar modifies the external one and vice-versa feature characteristic of affinity spaces (Gee, 2005). This dynamic applies to the use of all epistemic activities practiced within the elaboration, sharing, and LPS discourses, with some slight variations, which will be expanded upon in the following pages. It further applies to any type of discourse that influences the streamer's behaviour and narration during their playthrough and thus the LP content as such.

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[21] For example: *I'd say you're already too invested in other stats to make a pure strength build now, especially considering that some strength weapons require 50 in strength to use. The amount of souls required to level up gets to a point where its almost an exponential increase every level, it gets ridiculously expensive unless you focus on 3 or 4 stats to increase. You could increase both strength and dexterity and go for what's called a 'quality build', quality build weapons usually have average scaling in both strength and dex, examples including the halberd, claymore and longsword. Its up to you Chris, I just wouldn't spread your stats too thinly, especially on a blind run.   Matt Ell*

7.3.2 Asking a clarification question

Most of the inquiries made within the context of an LP affinity space bear a major semblance to the "asking clarification question" epistemic activity in the sense that it is a follow-up inquiry to one that has already been made insofar the LP content is the source of all potential questions that may be considered for an answer. Beyond the fact that it is not a question addressed to the original poster of a discussion board thread, as one doesn't exist here, it is otherwise the exact same thing:

i am surprised he was not invaded. is his internet off to avoid invasions?

cantseeme402

he's gonna have to come back for the wolf right?

LokiTetch

Here the first user is asking for clarification on the conditions in which the playthrough is taking place, while the second comment seeks to find out whether a certain boss fight is obligatory (and thus will surely happen at a later point) or not. Comments such as these affect the LP by further increasing the amount of potential knowledge transactions made within the affinity space, and are therefore part of the loop in Fig. 5.

7.3.3 Answering a clarification question

By means of this epistemic activity users of the affinity space engage in dialogue amongst themselves that is specifically directed at exchanging knowledge (asking a clarification question in an LP's comment section does not mean a dialogue is initiated until one is responded to). The following example is extracted from an ongoing discussion:

+newoldtwilight may the things that may or may not be within these cages be worth the effort of going back there from anar londo?

ussopking

+ussopking There's a really big soul (like, the second biggest one in the game if my memory seves me right) and a person who, depending on your build, might be worth rescuing. You'll need the appropriate key first if your starting item is not the Master Key, though.

newoldtwilight

Unlike the discussion boards featured in Arvaja's and Tohill's works, exchanges such as these rarely grow to significant lengths. Whereas Tohill ignored all threads with less than five replies in her data collection process (Tohill, 2016), there are but a few comments with so many replies in all four Dark Souls playthroughs considered here. Since most questions brought up in the comment sections of an LP tend to be very specific, their answers are unlikely to require any follow-up input. The vast majority of discussions then are short and to the point. Nevertheless this is one of the epistemic activities through which the elaboration discourse is practiced in its purest form, and a vehicle for numerous knowledge transactions.

7.3.4 Reasoned further

Depending on the playthrough the epistemic activity "reasoned further" might also be rare find in the context of these affinity spaces. Many users are content expressing their input in a couple of sentences and do not seek to engage in layered explanations or provide additional information. However this is not to say that the opposite does not happen and naturally I was curious to see whether for this particular epistemic activity I can observe a notable difference between the Dark Souls LPs of Christopher Odd and Masterkizz. In her study Kimberly Tohill defined as a "lengthy" response any input longer than 683 characters, "which represented a distinct break between the majority of excerpts and the few distinguished as much longer than most" (Tohill, 2016, p. 106).

For my purposes I decided to pick the ten longest comments from each playthrough data samples and compare them. It turned out that all ten comments from Odd's LP affinity space are longer than 500 characters, and furthermore all of them belonged to either the elaboration or the sharing discourse types. Meanwhile all ten longest comments from Masterkizz' LP comment sections were under 500 characters and three of these were of the evaluation discourse type, i.e. performed no knowledge transactions whatsoever. Somewhat unsurprisingly this finding is very much in line with the observations made in the previous chapter of the thesis and makes an important argument that the quantity and quality of user input in affinity spaces of the "Let's Play" variety may very well go hand in hand.

As an example of "reasoned further" input, I have extracted this fragment of a much longer comment that deals with the "killing the blacksmith" thematic hotspot discussed earlier, and which the reader can compare to the previously provided examples in 7.2:

[…] Don't kill Andre nor any NPC you can talk to. I'm not saying that killing some of them isn't valuable at some point but you have to know what you're doing when it stand to kill someone who can potentially help you out in this hell.

Plus, you'll never regret to leave them alive. No worry.

Killing Andre might even result of making the game impossible to complete for a beginner (Quiet frankly, I doubt you can take down the four kings with a +7 Falchion, and since this is your first run, finding weapons that doesn't need the help of Andre to be upgraded is ridiculously hard).

My advice would be to leave everybody alive, at least for your first run on the game. If you restart another game or plan to do a new game + then you can think about killing some of them (but even though, Blacksmith are incredibly valuable in this game, the only one who could be killed without harming you is the only one you can't kill. Maybe Vamos as well but there is no real benefit in doing so). […]

GenLiu

7.3.5 Lore knowledge

I did previously make some parallels between this epistemic activity and "(new) theoretical knowledge" and while apt these are clearly insufficient to describe it in appropriate detail. The main reason the provision of knowledge related to the game-generator's lore functions as an epistemic activity is that, while not necessarily connected to the internal grammar of the affinity space, it still serves basically the same function it does within the game itself – it provides context for gameplay. Where the LPs of Dark Souls are concerned, lore facilitates the advancement of one's understanding in a contextual way, as it adds an additional semiotic layer to both the gameplay proceedings and the streamer's narration. A very relevant example here would be this comment, since it points out the existence of precisely this layer of complexity:

They don't just put enemies around willy-nilly. Enemy location is almost always due to a lore standpoint or environmental storytelling

Alec Kozinski

It is worth noting however that none of the streamers whose playthroughs were used here appeared to be particularly invested in the topic. In fact Odd whose channel motto is "The story matters most" has commented repeatedly throughout his series that he is not interested in the story of Dark Souls, since the lore is so obscure and the connections between the various elements so

complicated, that he is simply unable to follow it and all related input from viewers only confuses him even more. This has not stopped the viewers of his or other playthroughs to discuss lore topics, but does make "lore knowledge" the prime example of an epistemic activity that does not actually influence (or does so in a negligible manner) the "Let's Play" content as such.

7.3.6 Challenging other's ideas

The last of the elaboration discourse epistemic activities is yet another case of user dialogue-exclusive input. Occasionally one might find faults with viewer advice much as I did with one of the examples in 7.3.1. It is in those situations where other user's challenge the original claims or outright correct them. For some reason Kimberly B. Tohill has identified such actions as "negative remarks or statements" in her work and contrasted them with a "social interaction across the forums [which] was inherently and decidedly positive" (Tohill, 2016, p. 124). Based on my observations I fail to see it in the same way, since while negativity is most definitely present in these affinity spaces (see 7.1), it does not necessarily have to do with challenging the ideas or knowledge of other individuals in said spaces. If anything more often than not this appears to be both a productive process and a positive interaction, which can be seen as fundamental to providing accurate information and in doing so influence the LP content in a constructive manner:

[…] Plus, even if you don't have your strength up too high, if you two hand your weapon it will double your strength.

Freedom Panic

It's not double, it's +50%.

Skayth Ecks

+Skayth Ecks oh, right. Alright well there you go. Thanks for the info. I don't play strength characters ever, so I rarely 2 hand.

Freedom Panic

Do note how the latter response provides context for interpreting the initial statement by giving one's own example, which is an epistemic activity characteristic of sharing discourse. Speaking of which...

7.3.7 Giving one's own example

I said early on in this chapter that I will try to avoid statistics for the most part, but this is one occasion that I need to bring those back in. In both Arvaja's and Tohill's works this epistemic activity was found to be widely used in the investigated online settings. In Tohill's instance "giving one's own example" amounted to 80% of all sharing discourse (Tohill, 2016). However, unlike the discussion boards in those studies, sharing one's personal experience in this manner does not seem to play that large of a role in the affinity spaces of the YouTube channel variety, with the exception of Kay's LP where this activity accounts for 13.3% of all comments (see [c4] values in Appendix I). Whatever the reason, it would seem that LP viewers prefer to contribute their knowledge in a more impersonal manner, preferring to treat it as a matter of fact as is the case with the ones featured in 7.3.1. Since the overall amount of analysed comment sections is rather low it is not possible to draw a definitive conclusion, but it would seem that this epistemic activity favours dialogue-focused settings like the aforementioned discussion boards.

I say that since the longest exchange (featuring nine replies) out of all comment sections was composed entirely of such comments and they appeared to be fairly prominently featured in other discussions as well. But since the number of such discussions is rather low to begin with, this appears to drive down the total instances of this epistemic activity's usage. It stands to reason then, that if the LP content creator consciously chooses to engage regularly in dialogue with their audience, this will provoke more such discussions throughout all episodes featured in their channel, since streamer comments in this sample have always attracted attention. This hypothesis is further supported by the fact that Kay has the highest number of streamer comments out of the four LPs: she has made 7 (all of which replies to other users' input), while KineticGTR – 3 (partially related to his "backseating" situation), Odd – 1, and Masterkizz – 0.

7.3.8 Agreeing

The opposite of challenging or correcting the input of other users in the affinity space, this epistemic activity nevertheless performs much the same role insofar it supports what is seen as accurate information or a useful idea. Those who agree with others often use the opportunity to

further elaborate on the topic at hand, thus performing a shift from sharing to elaboration discourse, as is the case with this exchange:

that ring is only really useful if you decide to actually farm something. For a non-farming let's play, the ring has little value. [...]

quineloe

+quineloe True, but it is possible he'll want to farm at some point to upgrade his weapon and do it off screen.

Freedom Panic

7.3.9 Sharing criticism

This one is similar to the previous type of epistemic activity, but in the sense of sharing the critical attitude of other people towards the streamer's performance. It is the other type of input identified by Tohill as "negative" for her setting (Tohill, 2016), and in this case I would be inclined to agree, but the issue here is that this appears to be an extremely rare occurrence in LP affinity spaces, and one which I could not find evidence of in the collected data. The only such instance, which I have provided underneath, is from a comment section included in this research, but likely added after I had performed my original data collection. Even though it is not part of the data sample proper I have chosen to include it for illustrative purposes. The exchange in question happens to concern Christopher Odd's lack of observational skills, something which has been brought up by other users, but never by means of sharing discourse as exhibited here:

Chris, tell me you noticed the pressure plates on the floor. The ones that make the arrows fire from the walls? You did notice those, right? Because they're the ones that fire the arrows, y'know. It's not just an invisible trigger. [...]

ferchrissakes

Well, to be fair, he didn't even recognize either Capra or Taurus Demon...

James Liu

In all other instances critical comments were either ignored or challenged by other users, which does fit with Tohill's observations mentioned earlier that in affinity spaces interactions among users are predominantly positive and enacted in a supportive fashion (Tohill, 2016).

7.3.10 Acknowledging personal learning

The first epistemic activity that belongs to what I have termed "Let's Play" Specific discourse does not technically contribute new knowledge to the affinity space as the knowledge transaction in question has already been made during the streamer's playthrough. Nevertheless, such comments serve to highlight said transaction, which makes the player aware that they may have discovered something unusual and/or worth noting on one hand, and provoke other users of the affinity space to share their own experience on the topic on the other. These seem to be a pretty rare occurrence with the notable exception of (once again) Kay's Dark Souls LP, which is unlikely to be an accident considering the multiple instances where her methodical approach to exploration and gameplay in general was the subject of praise by her audience. Some entries which exemplify the activity's use are:

I've seriously never actually used the dung. Now that I see what you did with it, I am starting to wonder why.

JBizCO

I had no idea you could reach and kill the giant that opens the gate to sen's fortress. Cool secret!

Jonathan Walmsley

Acknowledging personal learning can theoretically affect the content of the "Let's Play" in a manner similar to evaluation discourse comments. I.e. it is likely to reinforce the kind of approach in the streamer's gameplay, which may potentially result in teaching their viewers new knowledge and by extension learn more themselves. This is a validation dynamic the implications of which have been previously explored in formal teacher – student relationships (Sonneville, 2007), and should also apply in informal contexts such as these. Therefore, while part of the LPS discourse category as defined here, variations of this epistemic activity should be reasonably expected to exist in other types of affinity spaces, which involve processes of informal learning, including the discussion boards that Arvaja (2012) and Tohill (2016) worked at.

7.3.11 Making a demand

In my CFT coding scheme all questions made by affinity space users were clustered together, but in terms of epistemic activities I had to account for the fact that certain question addressed to the streamer did not deal with matters of clarification, but instead were straightforward requests:

When you find new armor can you please equip them and show them off? Thanks Mr Odd.

TheBoo

The influence of such comments on the "Let's Play" content is obviously of a very explicit nature and it is only up to the streamer to decide whether they will comply with the request. In the scenario above doing so will have the player dedicate some time to showcase the designs of the various armour sets the player encounters, which will potentially affect their and their viewers' gear choices based on their personal aesthetic preferences.

7.3.12 Speculating

The final LPS discourse epistemic activity is of the kind perhaps most characteristic of affinity spaces housing the fandoms of popculture mainstays like books, movies, TV series, and indeed video games. People love to speculate about what is going to happen next with their favourite stories and characters, and a variation of this practice can be observed in YouTube LP channels. The reason why such comments function as LPS epistemic activities is that they may also, albeit indirectly, perform knowledge transactions, or serve as a request for one to be made:

+HedgeKnight Matt What are the odds that he'll kill the next blacksmith he comes across? I'm thinking there's about a 60% chance of that happening.

Nish S

+VanemParmB Lets be honest there's little to no chance he'll find Kaathe, I'd be surprised if anyone does on their first playthrough.

Matt Ell

As seen in these examples such comments tend to converge on a dialogue setting similarly to those that provide details on one's personal experiences. These should not normally influence the LP content, since they discuss aspects of the game-generator's internal grammar, or potential future events almost entirely out of context, which makes them meaningless to the streamer. Nevertheless, they still invite and facilitate discussions among the rest of the users of the affinity space.

7.4 Summary of findings and answering the research question

In this chapter I applied thematic discourse analysis in order to find out what discourse types are used by the audiences of the four Dark Souls LPs subject of this research and how said usage affects both the content creators managing the "Let's Play" channels and their playthroughs, while also seeking to gain some understanding of the goals and values of the communities in the process. This approach was influenced by certain works on other affinity spaces and communities of practice as conducted by researchers Maarit Arvaja (2012) and Kimberly L. Tohill (2016), which allowed me to better situate the LP YouTube channel as a type of affinity space on one hand, and compare some of my observations with theirs on the other. Along the way a number of important findings were made, which I have summarized below as a necessarily extended answer to the second research question, as it was posed at the beginning of this research project, and which was: *What types of discourse are utilized in these affinity spaces and along what lines do they influence the content produced in the LP channels?*

Based on my data as extracted from the comment sections of the several selected episodes, there are seven types of discourses being shared in the "Let's Play" YouTube channels. These may be further differentiated based on whether they are practiced by means of epistemic activities or not, which results in two broader categories. To the former category belong the Elaboration, Sharing, and LPS discourses, while the latter accounts for the user input characteristic of the Affective, Evaluation, Network-building, and Social Cohesion ones. Elaboration is where the vast majority of knowledge transactions take place, predominantly via the "providing advice and know-how" epistemic activity. It and the rest of the epistemic activities found within Elaboration and Sharing discourses, with the exception of "lore knowledge" and "sharing criticism", influence the streamer and the content they produce with varying levels of explicitness depending on the epistemic activity. Said influence is enacted by means of an ongoing loop of largely knowledge-driven interactions taking place between several discrete stages corresponding to audience input, player agency, gameplay situations, and LP content, as presented in Figure 5.

The application of thematic discourse analysis onto the collected data has further revealed various patterns within audience input characteristic of one or more of the LP channels, which could be observed across Evaluation, Elaboration, Sharing and LPS discourses. More specifically there were multiple instances where viewers of Kay's and Odd's Dark Souls LPs would identify themselves as (re-

current) players of the game-generator, which contrasted rather sharply with Masterkizz' LP where there were multiple instances of people confirming that they have no previous experience with the game. Although I have no way of confirming this based solely on this data, it is perfectly possible that there exists a direct relationship between how many actual players of the game-generator count themselves among the audience of a given "Let's Play" and the frequency of knowledge transactions within the affinity space. While in hindsight such statement may seem somewhat obvious, it remains to be seen why it is that some "Let's Play" approaches attract players with know-how to share, and why others connect with a more casual crowd who is looking for entertainment above all else.

Meanwhile other emergent themes uncovered the existence of various "thematic hotspots" within the comment sections, signifying that certain gameplay events and streamer statements tend to attract significantly more attention from the audience than others, thus sharply increasing the use of one or more discourse types. Although it is difficult at this point to attempt and pinpoint exactly the key characteristics of such hotspots, it is certain that these may emerge following events which have taken place in any of the "audience input", "player agency", and "gameplay situations" stages of the affinity space grammar-modification loop. Examples of all three variations of such emergences were discussed in detail in 7.2.

One of these examples dealt with an issue, which upon some reflection appears to be of a very significant consequence for any "Let's Play" channel-type affinity space. Namely the concept of "backseating" as applied by the channel's owner and their audience, may have drastic effects on the overall amount, frequency and type of knowledge shared within the affinity space, depending on the particularities of said application. "Backseating" is just one of many items product of the emergent culture of these affinity spaces, but since its parameters as a practice may directly limit or enable the making of certain knowledge transactions, its one the enactment of which will most certainly require further research.

Finally, even without resorting to quantitative methods, it is clear that certain types of user input are less pronounced in the LP channel-type of affinity space when compared to the discussion boards featured in Arvaja's (2012) and Tohill's (2016) research. Theirs being a more of a user-to-user interaction focused online environments seems to invite a lot more instances of individuals sharing their personal experiences and utilizing the "giving one's own example" epistemic activity. However, as the latter's use was much more frequent in the one channel whose owner frequently engaged in interacting with their audience via the LP comment sections, there is evidence to suggest that these results are in fact a matter of streamer input rather than inherent to the platform itself, or the type of affinity space as such. But this of course is a question to be investigated at another point in time.

CHAPTER EIGHT:

DISCOURSES OF A "LET'S PLAY": DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF THE LANGUAGE-IN-USE IN THE AFFINITY SPACES OF "LET'S PLAY" YOUTUBE CHANNELS

As the title betrays, the eighth chapter will focus on investigating the role of Discourse in the performances and interactions taking place within the affinity spaces that have emerged around the shared playthroughs of video games, which populate the LP channels of YouTube. For this purpose J. P. Gee's Discourse Analysis will be implemented to explore the situated meaning of language as it is utilized during the processes of production of certain LP episodes, i.e. the recorded performance of the players, and their consumption – that is through the contents of their comment sections. This part of the text will retain the comparative angle following from the previous chapters by dealing specifically with the two LP channels that have the highest and lowest levels of knowledge exchange as previously established, which means that the spotlight in the next pages will fall mostly on Christopher Odd's and Masterkizz's playthroughs of the original Dark Souls game, though content from Kay's and KineticGTR's LP segments will also be referred to on occasion where applicable.

A defining characteristic of Discourse analysis and by extension one of the chief reasons for its use here is its inherent capacity for interpreting language beyond its core function of conveying information and the basic sender-recipient model, variations of which continue to underpin the vast majority of communication theory discourse (Narula, 2006). While in the previous chapters the goal was to establish the contents and quantities of the different types of knowledge being exchanged through the interactions occurring in the affinity space, now it is time to take a look at how the space itself construes the meaning of these exchanges. As was discussed earlier, Discourses with a capital D are the ways in which people imbue language with various other elements, material or otherwise, in order to enact their worldviews, their relationships with individuals and institutions, and so on (Gee, 1999). Therefore, attending to this crucial aspect of the playthroughs within "Let's Play" YouTube channels will allow us to examine the potentials for learning and education of these affinity spaces as functions of the process of networking said social and material resources within the context of a community that has developed its own raison d'etre and structures for participation in the pursuit of that unspoken purpose.

When I introduced Discourse analysis in the literature review part I explained that what this approach ultimately focuses on is the situation network, which the use of language is embedded in

at a specified time and space (Gee, 1999). The analysis proceeds in two directions simultaneously, exploring how language is applied to the creation of the situation network and how said network gives meaning to the used language, hence why we talk about situated meaning. This is formalized through the investigation of six building tasks each concerned with a different aspect of the situation network and each essentially representing a category of questions to be asked about it. The first of the six categories is the semiotic one and it is concerned with the relevance of sign systems, ways of knowing, and social languages. It is followed by the world building task, which seeks answers about the situated meanings of words and objects relevant to the situation and potentially cultural models and institutions that may affect it. Activity building in turn deals with well – activities (and eventually sub-activities), and the details of distinct actions that comprise them. Then there is the identity and relationship building task, which explores the socio-cultural aspects of roles and interpersonal links, their relevance and how they are reinforced or changed by the situation. The political building asks questions about the relevance of various social goods and how they may be connected to the cultural models mentioned earlier. Finally, there is the connection building task, which focuses on how the different segments of the interaction are chained together, how they stretch across to past or future such interactions, or other elements (people, ideas, resources, etc.), and how all these connections are woven together to create a coherent picture, or perhaps fail to do so. Providing those questions with answers on the basis of the qualitative data available constitutes the successful implementation of Discourse analysis as such.

For reasons not too dissimilar to those presented above, this particular methodology has been successfully employed in the service of researching a great variety of settings and domains of practice, like educational institutions, corporate workplaces, online games, and even everyday life as such (Steinkuehler, 2004). Naturally, Discourse analysis has also been frequented as a tool for the exploration of affinity spaces of various kinds, especially given that it has been developed by the same scholar who conceptualized those. In each of these scenarios it is important that the reader of the so explicated proceedings gets acquainted in advance with the peculiarities characteristic of the language used in each specific setting. It is no accident that interactions in every context sufficiently removed from the dominant everyday reality are swift to produce a slang or dialect of sorts, which sometimes may very well be initially impenetrable to outsiders. This most definitely holds true for video games and the affinity spaces that have emerged around such generators.

However in the case of YouTube LP channels, or perhaps I should say – at least these particular YouTube LP channels, as there are surely plenty of exceptions not known to me – the conversation does not deviate too much from the common ground of the typical English language-

in-use and thus allows for the affinity spaces to be largely accessible to anyone with a moderate hold on it[22]. This accessibility of course, the extent of which remains narrowly related to the streamer and their style so to speak, is also yet another reason why this type of affinity space can be seen as a worthwhile candidate for educational purposes. It is important for any such endeavour to maximize inclusivity and minimize the presence of any potential barriers, linguistic or otherwise. Nevertheless, considering that this here chapter is so heavily fixated on language, in the following few paragraphs I will distil some of the vocabulary, as well as certain information about the setting that is very much required for being a player of Dark Souls, a spectator of a playthrough of this title, or a reader of this thesis.

8.1 In preparation for play

8.1.1 Word(s) to the wise

As was previously discussed this title is very much a traditional, albeit dark, fantasy game, which comes with the requisite for the genre castles, dragons, swords, shields, magic spells, etc. and since these are more or less intuitively familiar to anyone with even a passing awareness of contemporary popular culture, I will focus only on several specific terms that are unique to the game and its world. All of these were utilized in the segments from the episodes, which were transcribed during the process of data collection for Discourse analysis. Said transcriptions can be accessed unabridged in Appendix III.

- Bonfire

This one was already introduced in chapter 5.1, but since it is such a key concept and so much revolves around it I will revisit it here. In Dark Souls players can only save their progress and restore their limited healing resources at a bonfire – a literal one, as fire happens to be deeply integrated within the overarching mythology of this universe. While

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[22] It is important to note that the competitive gaming scene tends to differ a lot in that respect. Most e-sports titles are often extremely slang heavy, especially the fighting games community, since there are many moves for each of their characters (and many characters in each game), and furthermore there are unique mechanics for every single such title. On top of that e-sports titles also usually have commentators involved, who usually come up with various semantic "shortcuts" in order to deliver the necessary information as fast as possible, and those become terms of their own further down the line.

it has extensive utility, the single most important thing about the bonfire is that if one cannot find or gain access to such a location, they will need to return to the previous one they have used, and in doing so will return all the enemies in the game to their initial state thus removing all progress achieved meanwhile. Needless to say the persistent search for a bonfire is an ongoing objective of every player at any given time.

- Humanity

A multipurpose resource and mechanic, humanity is slowly accumulated through fighting enemies and can occasionally be found as loot – on corpses, or a drop from rats who feed on said corpses – as its source is said to be somehow related to bone marrow. Bosses also always provide some humanity upon defeat. If used at a bonfire it will return the player to their human form. Normally in Dark Souls the player character is in an undead state, which is what they resurrect as whenever they die. Being human allows them the ability to summon other players or NPCs for help, but also allows malicious such players or NPCs to invade their game world. When consumed normally it will heal the player completely and add +1 to the player's humanity pool. As the latter grows, it increases the chance to find precious items as well as the various resistances and defences of the character. Death nullifies the humanity pool and removes all the bonuses listed above.

- Resistance

Depending on the weapon or the spell used (or the specific environment) there are several types of damage in the game – fire, lightning, poison, bleeding, etc. For each of said types every armor piece has a respective resistance value assigned that determines the extent to which the character will be affected by said damage type.

- Estus flask

This is the main healing resource in Dark Souls. As both the players and many of their enemies are undead humans they may not heal through traditional means. Estus flasks can only be filled up at a bonfire, while their amount and efficiency can be slowly increased in the course of the game by performing various deeds.

- Titanite

This is the resource used for upgrading one's weapons and armor and naturally a treasured find. It comes in a number of quantities, ranging from a shard to a slab.

- Illusory walls

In the world of Dark Souls some entrances are obscured by apparent material obstacles. The illusion shatters when hit with a weapon or rolled into.

- Rolling

Also dodging, this is the mechanic that allows players to avoid incoming attacks. Pressing the dedicated button and a direction simultaneously will both move the player character at some distance and render them invulnerable for the duration of that move (the numerical value of the duration of the latter is referred to as invincibility frames). The effectiveness of rolling is dependent on the character's overall weight, which in turn is determined by their equipment (but not the rest of their inventory, which is technically limitless).

- Lock-on

This is a mechanic, which when activated allows the player character to position so that they look at and attack a specific enemy (their blows will still affect others if they happen to be in the way). It is required if one is to be precise in their control over the character in a fight.

- Backstab

While locked-on, if one manages to circle around and behind a humanoid enemy, there exists a specific angle from which delivering a normal attack will result in a backstab. This move deals a lot of extra damage and (similar to rolling) renders the player invulnerable for the duration of the animation. Players will often seek to exploit the latter aspect when surrounded.

- Parry

Another special type of a sword-fighting move, the successful parry – a timed button press when receiving an attack themselves – allows the player to deflect all incoming damage and immediately after that to execute a counterattack, which takes away the same amount of extra health from the enemy as the backstab. Naturally, parries can only be performed where appropriate, meaning that one cannot parry a dragon's breath for example.

- Soul

The titular souls play the role of both experience points for the player's character, and currency that facilitates trade in the game world. However, the same term is also used for a type of item that can be found and kept in the player's inventory until used. Unlike regular souls, which are lost upon the player's death, this particular kind will remain unaffected by such an event. The amount of regular souls that can be acquired from such an item depends on whose soul that supposedly was (the soul of a brave warrior would be more valuable than that of a nameless soldier, etc.). Some players also tend to use the word soul for any loot (when received from an enemy loot is also commonly referred to as "drop") they see in the game, likely because of the characteristic glow and ephemeral shapes all those have (i.e. in Dark Souls even a breastplate or a spear will have that same look before it is picked up).

8.1.2 The ins and outs of Sen's Fortress

The analysis will utilize data from the same Sen's Fortress area runs, which were portrayed in the Let's Play episodes as presented in the previous chapter. More specifically there will be two segments extracted from the streamers' content produced from that part of the game. Earlier in the text I did mention that Sen's Fortress is somewhat unique in some respects and now I will elaborate some more on why that is. Unlike other areas in Dark Souls, Sen's Fortress is a gauntlet of sorts designed (also in the sense of the game's own lore and context) to test the mettle of those attempting to pursue the main story goals of the game. As such it is not optional, and there is only one way in, and one way out (apart of leaving through the entrance that is), which is also one of the main reasons for its selection – the majority of other locations are too open and complicate any potential comparison among the performances of the different players.

The fortress run can be roughly split in two halves, with the area's sole bonfire used as something of a midpoint. While the first half takes place inside the building, the second part sees the player navigating the rooftops. The chosen segments are more or less in the respective beginnings of each half. The first segment has the players go through their first "swinging blades" platforming[23] sequence that has three possible exits and thus endpoints – the intended one, where they continue deeper into the fortress; a secret one, hidden behind an illusory wall, which leads out of the hall

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[23] This term refers to a classic 2D genre a well-known example of which would be Super Mario Bros. The player needs to traverse over platforms (hence the name) often positioned at different levels, which usually involves a lot of precise jumping around, while avoiding various obstacles, traps and enemy attacks.

(though one still has to return and go through the swinging blades afterwards, I consider any form of exit from the location as an endpoint for the segment); and the unfortunate one – death. The second segment begins when the players first set foot on the roof and also has three exits – the players manage to clear the danger of a certain giant throwing explosives at them and continue traversing the rooftops beyond the platform on which the bombs land; the players find the hidden bonfire by dropping from that same platform onto the balcony it is positioned on; and of course, once again – death.

At this point in time video games have a long history as a medium evolving in conjunction with those who play them. Much like other socio-cultural processes this evolution takes place in a wave-like pattern that is a result of the continuous emergence of new trends and reactions to said trends, which in turn produce trends of their own. With the rapidly increasing popularity of the medium in the first decade of the century, and the boom of home consoles, which began in earnest with the release of the first PlayStation device by Sony, and which dramatically reconfigured how people accessed said medium, a recurring theme of the AAA[24] titles created during that period appears to be accessibility and streamlining. Video games in general seemed to lower their overall demands from the player aiming to deliver a consistent and controlled experience to everyone in the process, and in doing so minimize friction and maximize the potential market of the title. For a good example of this one can take a look at The Elder Scrolls series and its development over time (Graft, 2011). The Souls series, or rather the titles of From Software as produced under their now President Hidetaka Miyazaki, appear at a glance to be the result of a reaction to this very approach, instead reintroducing design values resembling the arcade era of gaming when the budgets were a mere fraction of the contemporary ones. In those days the main method of capitalising on titles that were often no more than a half an hour long, was to make them difficult enough that players aiming to complete them needed to insert coin after coin in order to learn and progress through the game.

As such an entire generation of gamers who have spent the last decade or so having their gameplay spelled out for them to consume in bite-sized portions were suddenly thrust into a world, which featured no hand-holding whatsoever, if they wanted to know what all the fuss is about. Thus followed with what is probably the first and foremost question that each and every Dark Souls player

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[24] These are games with high production values that have large development teams working for several years to complete them and as such form the core of what the gaming discourse centers around at any given point in time. An analogue in the entertainment industry would be blockbuster movies like the Star Wars, and Lord of the Rings franchises, or the currently inescapable Marvel Cinematic Universe. Naturally, there are numerous exceptions to the rule where a small project comes out of nowhere and hijacks the conversation, like Counter Strike, Minecraft, Player Unknown Battlegrounds, etc. but as with all exceptions they only reinforce the rule.

has asked, whether in their heads or out loud, upon arriving at Firelink Shrine[25] – "What am I *supposed* to do?" It is a question that will persist throughout all of the playthroughs, indeed often the first reaction to every new place and every new situation that each of the streamers I followed for the purpose of this project, will come back to asking again and again. Even when they have already figured out the mechanics and principles governing the world of Dark Souls, it is apparently hard to let go of the conditioning that you should expect to know what you are supposed to do every step of the journey.

Sen's Fortress is however something of a peculiar beast in that respect, mainly because of its gauntlet-like, seemingly platforming-focused, deliberate design, which was brought up earlier. The swinging blades, the narrow bridges, and the dark pitfalls on their sides immediately betray the exact intention of the area, as these are features shared with many other games (or movies for that matter). As Gee points out himself, "Situations are never completely novel (indeed, if they were, we wouldn't understand them). Rather, they are repeated, with more or less variation, over time" (Gee, 1999, p. 83). He is speaking of repeating configurations of semiotic resources, recognizable patterns that the design elements listed above signify structurally and visually. It is indeed a rare occasion where Dark Souls pre-empts any confusion on the player's behalf and states clearly what they need to do. But however welcome this clarity may be, this setup is also certain to fill the players with dread, because this being Dark Souls, the costs of failure remain high, and unlike typical platformers here they will have to do the traversal in three dimensions with an armoured character.

The first situation that we will explore together with our heroes in this chapter takes place in what is effectively the second room of the fortress. The first room that they are entering from has already made a statement about the nature of this area – the very first tile on the floor that the player's character steps on in Sen's Fortress activates a trap, which sends three flying arrows in their direction. Immediately afterwards two of the fortress' sentinels – hulking, humanoid lizardmen – appear from the back of the room and attack the player. Their swords do a lot of damage and have significant reach, while their shields allow them to absorb attacks easily – these are likely to be the strongest "common" enemies that the player has encountered so far. Taken together these two problems also present an affordance, which those who have learned to speak the language of the game should be able to recognize and make use of on subsequent attempts. Sidestepping the trap, alerting the guards, and then activating the trap when they are themselves in the arrows' path is an opportunity, which with some luck will see the player fighting only one of the enemies. The lessons

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[25] This is the player's homebase of sorts in the game world, which lies in the centre of it, both logistically and metaphorically.

from the first room then are: do not trust the floor; avoid fighting if you can; use the traps to your advantage.

Armed as we are with all this knowledge, we can now proceed with the rest of the chapter, which will be itself divided in three sections. Firstly, in "An Odd player in an odd place" I will proceed to explore Christopher Odd's performance during his first visit to Sen's Fortress. The interactions between player and game will be structured with the tools of ecological psychology and interpreted as a de facto conversation by means of the Discourse analysis method, which will make this chapter a somewhat more experimental affair than the prior ones. Do take note that I will not explicitly write up every single interaction as an affordance/effectivity fit, for after the initial such descriptions this will render the text extremely repetitive, since essentially every single player action in response to the properties of an object, an AI routine, etc. represents an attempt at such a fit. Trying for a backstab when an opponent has turned their back to the player, drinking estus in-between enemy attacks, timing a roll through the swinging blades on the bridge – these are all instances of the same basic pattern (more on that in 7.2.2). This approach to exploration will be repeated in the next part "Laughing in hell", where it will be Masterkizz' turn to take on the dangers of the notorious Dark Souls location. The chapter will then conclude with a discussion of the findings as they relate to my research questions for this specific part of the project and how these serve to outline the concept of the "Let's Play Performance Profile". Prior to this however I will detail some of the particularities of applying Discourse analysis to LP gameplay in this manner.

8.1.3 On the practical application of Discourse analysis to gameplay segments

When talking about narrated gameplay, one may initially entertain the idea of the final product being akin to a documentary or a newsreel of sorts. After all there is footage of events and a narrator who explains away the proceedings, and indeed some channels do feature such approaches to their content whereby the creator focuses on producing heavily edited material, layering all sorts of elements on top of their original recordings – memes, music, and whatnot. Even in traditional "Let's Play" channels it is also sometimes the case that the streamer edits their recorded gameplay so that they skip parts they deem boring or repetitive, and presents their audience with a summary of what has transpired where narration is being done post-gameplay.

In the Souls games specifically it is not a rarity to have a player be stuck on a given boss fight for many hours, in which case they would usually leave their first few attempts in, perhaps followed

by a reel of standout moments, and cap it all off with that hard earned successful run (depending on popular demand they may upload the unedited footage as well). Also, depending on the author, there may be often intros and/or outros edited in for some or all episodes of the LP, or other material, all of which however falls in the category of a "special case". And in order to examine the practice in its typical, dominant form one has to avoid the special cases and instead focus on the banal moments – those driving its everyday reality (Steinkuehler, 2004). Thus all the segments chosen for analysis in this chapter are very much Dark Souls at its most banal. Because of that the ensuing conversations end up being a lot like the informal ones taking place between two people – largely composed of loosely organised lines, which are more often than not fragmented, sentences are left incomplete, full of exclamations and sudden shifts in tone, etc.

These and other idiosyncrasies of human expression are transcribed and organized through a basic set of notational tools typical for this kind of language analysis as follows. Each discrete line contains one "idea unit" (or "tone unit" depending on the focus of analysis), i.e. words that belong together and form an informational contour (Gee, 1999). The inclusion of two slashes [//] in the line means that this idea unit is a final one, as in it has delivered the information as intended by the speaker. If the slashes are missing from any given idea unit, this means that it sounds like more information is to arrive on the matter. Of course this may, or may not actually happen, depending on the situation. In the transcripts of the gameplay segments the aforementioned idea units are combined in stanzas. That is they are topically linked together and this connection appears to be done intentionally. Stanzas also represent the ceiling in terms of functional units of analysis for this text as the subject of research is predominantly composed of interactional conversations that contain little in the way of the macrostructure, which would characterize a higher level of exposition or narration. In each idea unit there is an underlined word, meaning that its delivery carries the major emphasis or stress of that particular line. Any capitalized words are emphatic, which is to say they are pronounced with more stress than usual. Lastly, two dots [..] signify that a distinct pause can be heard in the speech, while a colon [:] within the word means a vowel elongation.

According to Gee, the ideal scenario (meaning one that never truly occurs) for conducting Discourse analysis is to be able to fully answer eighteen questions in total spread across the afore-mentioned six categories (Gee, 1999), but of course not all eighteen are meaningful to ask in the context of the task at hand as it is being developed here. For this particular frame I find that answers to the questions from the first three building tasks as listed earlier – namely semiotic, world and activity building – are the most relevant to pursue, and expect that connection building might also come into play, depending on the exact contents of the gameplay segments. Due to the choice of

game-generator, one should not find much to work with in terms of political building, whereas the socioculturally-situated identity and relationship building task will mostly become relevant whenever the analysis switches over to the "streamer <-> audience" frame.

While the segments that are to be covered here are not particularly long from a gameplay perspective – both Christopher Odd and Masterkizz clear the room in about six or so minutes – the action becomes rather detailed when viewed through the lens of Discourse analysis as there are numerous elements enrolling into the situation network literally every other second. Because this produces a very dense description, I have further broken down the segments into several scenes, whereby I will answer the questions for all relevant building tasks at the end of every such scene. For the sake of avoiding redundancy any questions the answers to which remain unchanged from scene to scene will not be brought up again at every turn.

8.2 An Odd player in an odd place

8.2.1 Scene A

Stanza 1

Likely keeping said lessons fresh in his mind Christopher Odd carefully enters the room from a narrow staircase, appearing on the rightmost end of a terrace-like platform, and observes the four giant swinging blades upfront immediately upon entering the hall.

1   CO: <u>Oh</u>!
2   CO: Oh Jesus, I thought that was like a .. <u>monster</u>. //

Detecting the movement of something large in the distance in a world that certain enemies tower above the player character makes the above a reasonable guess especially since most if not all surrounding structures of the world itself have been static until now. Odd takes a few steps ahead and surveys the area more carefully – there is a narrow bridge under the swinging blades that crosses a large pit. Factory-like metallic noise fills the space.

Stanza 2

3   CO: Oh, this is <u>good</u>! //

The line is soaked with pure irony – he has just recognized the design elements discussed previously and makes clear he is expecting a lot of trouble in dealing with this particular problem. First however he moves to the left corner of the platform and breaks some vases, as he is acting upon the affordance of these junk items potentially hiding something valuable. There is none. Odd's camera lingers on an item located on a balcony above that corner, but remains silent. Then he returns at the beginning of the bridge and reads the glowing message left on the floor.

Stanza 3

4   DS: <u>Sorrow</u>. //

5   CO: <u>Sorrow</u>.

6   CO: Yeah, I <u>see</u> that… //

The message has been left from another player at some point earlier in time and the game has decided to make it visible in Odd's world. The single word speaks volumes, especially when one notes the numerous ratings applied to it, which means that many other players approve of the message. There will be much frustration ahead, many have experienced the same, and now is your turn. Odd attempts hesitantly to go by the first swinging blade and quickly steps back to safety.
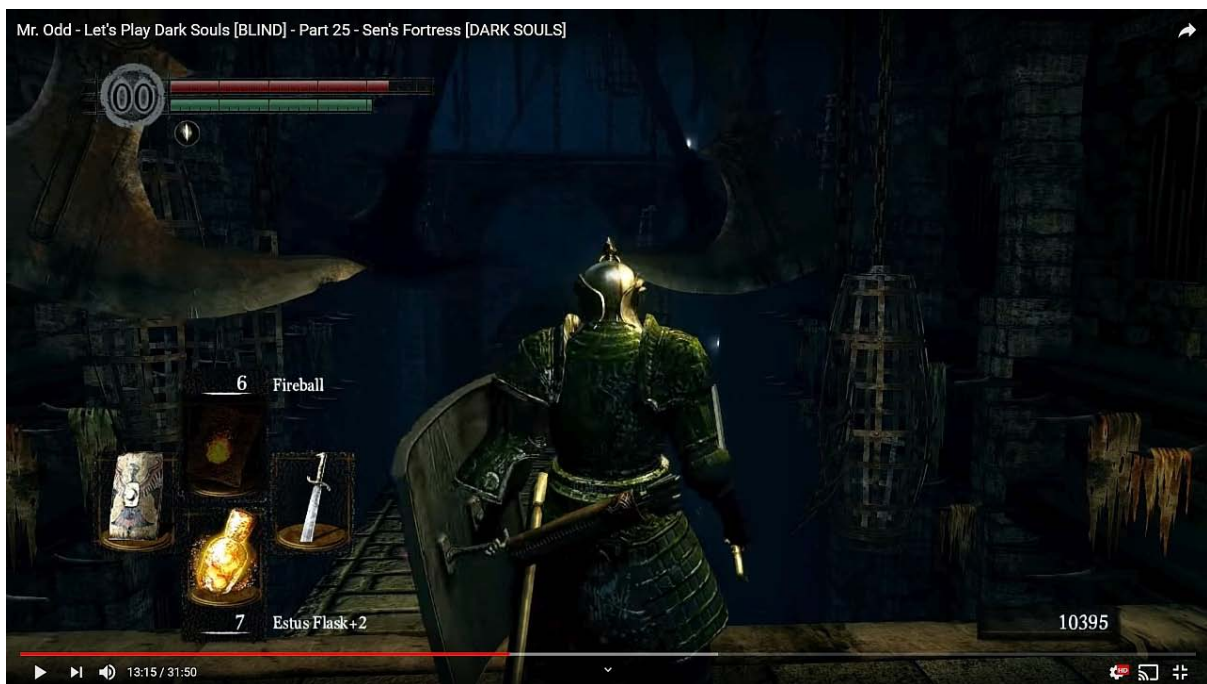
Figure 6: The second room of Sen's Fortress as seen from the starting platform.

Stanza 4

7   <u>Jeez</u>! //

With a single word of his own Odd also speaks volumes here. The utterance says he feels insecure about the prospects of performing the task as communicated to him by the game; he is averse to taking risks, and he is willing to look for another solution to the situation rather than engage with the blades directly.

Timing the swings of the blades and estimating the distance between them relative to the speed of his character, Odd decides it is time to move and rushes through the first two blades unscathed. He stops at the safe spot between the second and the third blade to time the next move, but only now notices something else waiting at the very end of the bridge – the hall is dark and the blades clearly attracted all his attention up to this point (see Fig. 3).

Stanza 5

8   CO: Oh no, look at <u>that</u>!
9   CO: Are you <u>kidding</u>?! //

One of the lizardmen is standing on the bridge, which is narrow enough to make passing by the sizable creature sufficiently difficult even without eventually exchanging blows with it, or having to deal with the swinging blades at the same time. When the realization hits him Odd switches frames for the first time in this situation – he is no longer the player interacting with the game, but a streamer who wants to call their audience's attention to what has suddenly become the most important thing in the situation network. In the next line though he bounces back to the player POV demanding to know whether this change is indeed for real (he knows very well that it is). It is an informal expression not meant to be taken literally. He may have had something else to say in that stanza as well, but the game changes the situation yet again only a second later – a lightning bolt flies in view somewhere from above and to the right and hits his character, the sound of crackling electricity adding even more tension in the air.

10   CO: Oh, <u>no</u>! //

Immediately he lifts his shield up, which absorbs most of the second bolt that hits shortly after, though some of the lightning elemental damage does soak through. Odd sees that there is another lizard-like enemy up on a bridge above him, which crosses the one he's on at a 90-degree angle.

Stanza 6

11   CO: <u>How the hell</u>...

It remains unclear what the precise subject of this question is. A third lightning bolt strikes his shield. Odd turns the camera backwards, as he realizes he will have to go back yet again and begins timing the move. Blocking a fourth bolt, he makes his intentions explicit.

12   CO: OK. I need to .. I need to <u>leave</u>!

There is a clear sense of urgency in his voice. Weighing the risks, Odd prefers to take damage from the next lightning bolt, which does indeed strike him in the back in short order, but to return to the beginning of the bridge and hopefully to safety. That direct hit however brings the character's health points dangerously low – another lightning bolt, blocked or not, and they are done for. Thus immediately after his roll clears the danger of the first axe Odd drinks an estus flask and regains about three quarters of his health. However, the couple of seconds necessary for that action to take place are precious and seeing his character remain unprotected for such a long time provokes a tiny outburst of panic.

Stanza 7

13   CO: <u>Go</u>! //

It is a pretty rare moment, where the player utters a commanding line directed at their own character, meaning that commands for movement have already been entered through the controller (likely several times even), but the game insists that the animations of every single action have to go through in full before another is to follow. Finally the character complies and with another heavy roll they land on the initial platform. During that action Odd turns the camera around just in time to see the coming bolt dissipate as it hits one of the swinging blades behind him.

8.2.2 Building the situation network from Scene A

With our hero getting a breather from the action that so suddenly ramped up on him, it is time to take a look at whether this short scene – it clocks just under a minute of gameplay – has given us something to work with already in terms of Discourse. Let's begin with the semiotic building task. As per Gee (1999, p. 93) the first question in this category is: "What sign systems are relevant (and irrelevant) in the situation (e.g. speech, writing, images, and gestures)? How are they made relevant (and irrelevant), and in what ways?"

Clearly the relevant sign systems for this scene and throughout the rest of the playthrough are the player's speech and the flow of images and sounds produced by the game, and that they are engaged in a dialogue with each other. The player's speech does not bring much to the table in this scene. The thirteen lines uttered within the context of the scene are comprised of verbalizations of emotions like surprise, panic, and confusion, and various exclamations. However the content of the latter system depends not only on the game's programming, but also on the player's decisions as they see only what they choose to look at, and hear only the sounds at the location they have decided to be in at any given moment in time. Still these decisions are made strictly based on the affordances presented by the game's design and recognized by the player on basis of their previous experience with this and other games. Therefore one can say that the flow of this particular sign system is the output of the computational loop that occurs in the process of situated cognition that is gameplay (Krause, 2014) – in itself a dialogue between a human mind and the game's software. This leads to the conclusion that the dialogue within the player <-> game frame as recorded in the playthrough is a second-order conversation – a product of exchange that has already happened at a different level.

The second question about semiotic building is "What systems of knowledge and ways of knowing are relevant (and irrelevant) in the situation? How are they made relevant (and irrelevant), and in what ways?" (Gee, 1999, p. 93). Again something that applies not only to this scene, but also to the playthrough in its entirety is that it reveals game mechanics as the main system of knowledge in effect. But what are game mechanics in terms of Discourse analysis? They are verbs signifying what one can do with any given thing in the game (Gee, 2015). The vases in the corner can be *broken;* the lightning bolt flying in your direction can be *blocked*, and so on. Most of these largely reflect the syntax and semantics of the real world, but always have a layer of functionality specific to the game being played.

Beyond the semiotics the only other category that is viable for discussion at this early point is the activity building. The questions for this task are "What is the larger or main activity (or set of activities) going on in the situation? What sub-activities compose this activity (or these activities)? What actions […] compose these sub-activities and activities?" (Gee, 1999, p. 93). Here we have a very clear structure of the situation gradually emerging over the course of the scene. The swinging blades design makes it clear to the player – as they are an experienced gamer, who has encountered similar setups before – that the activity to be performed is to cross the bridge. It is clearly so *obvious* that Odd never stops to take a look down in the pit, or up to notice the enemy that will eventually fling those lightning bolts at him. The sub-activities that compose it also reveal themselves one by

one the moment the first attempt to cross the bridge is made. The four blades need to be avoided; the enemy at the end of the bridge must be dealt with; the enemy throwing lightning must be dealt with. Based on the pairings of affordances and effective abilities, various separate actions can also be identified, but for that we have to proceed to the next scene.

8.2.3 Scene B

Stanza 8

Having arrived back at the platform, Odd paces back and forth for a while, before speaking his mind:

14 CO: Alright, <u>how</u> am I gonna deal with that thing?
15 CO: I'm gonna need to .. <u>use arrows</u> I think. //

Odd has clearly decided to begin untangling the knot with the last problem to present itself. The bow is his character's only way of dealing damage over distance and as such the obvious tool to resort to in similar situations. Especially since his character has not learned or practiced any magic abilities so far, with spells being the only other means of ranged combat in Dark Souls. The camera switches to first person view when he pulls out the bow and begins shooting arrows at his adversary. Some arrive at their destination; others get caught in the blades' swings. Meanwhile the lightning bolts keep flying towards him, but all seem to dissipate before reaching the platform.

Stanza 9

16 CO: Can he not <u>hit</u> me from here? //

The game cannot provide a definitive answer to that question. It is not possible to tell if it is the spell that has a certain effective range (most likely), or if he has run into some sort of a glitch. Either way the outcome remains the same, so Odd chooses to hold his position and keeps firing the arrows. He can see a health bar above the enemy that goes down with every successful hit. However it goes down by very little at a time – the bow is a weapon the character is not particularly proficient with – and he realizes it might take a while to put the lizardman down with this approach.

17 CO: I'm <u>barely</u> doing any damage to him, but ..
18 CO: my <u>alternative</u> ..
19 CO: is to <u>run</u> ..
20 CO: but I see one is at the very <u>end</u>…

Odd is going though his options again, but does not seem to be able to formulate another viable solution just yet. However, evoking his other lizardman issue seems to have triggered an idea – he seizes the arrow barrage and goes back to the beginning of the bridge.

Stanza 10

> 21 CO: I almost <u>wonder</u>…
> 22 CO: maybe I should <u>grab</u> the one that's at the very end
> 23 CO: and see if he'll get <u>knocked off</u> by these things.
> 24 CO: That's an <u>option</u>. //

Apparently Odd has learned the lesson from the previous room – one can use the traps for their own benefit. He cannot be sure whether his idea will work as sometimes certain enemies may be "leashed" at a certain position, and will keep it no matter what the player does thus forcing them to take an approach predetermined by the designers. But of course it does not hurt to test it. Odd takes aim again and shoots at the enemy on the bridge, but the shot misses the mark and ricochets from the wall behind them, making the lizardman turn around in the direction of the noise.

> 25 CO: If I can <u>hit</u> him... //

Even though this line casts doubt over his own skills, his next arrow does land on target. The enemy turns back around and looks at Odd.

Stanza 11

> 26 CO: Let's see if he'll <u>come</u>…
> 27 CO: Here he <u>comes</u>! //

Indeed the lizardman begins running across the bridge and slips by the first blade. While enemies in Dark Souls do not have self-preservation scripts outside of accounting for the player's actions in combat, i.e. they will not try to avoid the blades, the sight of the creature making its way forward, looking all determined makes an impression on Odd.

> 28 CO: <u>Look</u> at him! //

It is the second time Odd switches frames in this segment. As he is observing the outcome of his own actions from just a second ago, he is for a brief moment also a spectator and as such part of the LPs audience – another viewer waiting to see how the scene is going to unfold. The enemy's luck runs out on the second blade – they get hit and fall over in the pit.

Stanza 12

29 CO: There we <u>go</u>!
30 CO: <u>Sick</u>!
31 CO: (laughs)
32 CO: <u>Yes</u>!

Odd is obviously rather happy that his plan has succeeded, uttering several exclamations of approval in a row, but then he realizes that this might not necessarily be the end of it. For the first time since he has entered the room, he steps on the edge of the platform and looks down into the pit.

Stanza 13

33 CO: Is he <u>dead</u>?
34 CO: Oh, he's not even <u>dead</u>! //

Somewhat disappointed Odd observes the lizardman getting back on their feet and moving diagonally under the bridge thus disappearing from Odd's view. Instead of taking a look at the other side of the bridge, Odd pulls out his bow again and returns to his previous task to remove the lightning bolt caster from the equation while discussing a possible scenario out loud. The way he talks about it is more akin of making a joke, as he apparently is not aware at this point that if an enemy is moving at all that means that they must have a clear path either to the player's current position or to their initial one.

35 CO: Now he's gonna be <u>haunting</u> me…
36 CO: He'll come back when I <u>least</u> expect it. //

The arrows begin flying again and Odd probably is prepared to keep at it for some time, low damage numbers and all, but what he evidently does not notice is that each arrow hit pushes the enemy back just a little bit. Surely enough couple of arrows in and the caster suddenly falls from the bridge to their apparent death as Odd's character receives souls for the kill.

Stanza 14

37 CO: Oh, <u>sweet</u>!
38 CO: K, I didn't expect <u>that</u> one! //
39 CO: At least that gives me a little bit of <u>breathing room</u>. //

8.2.4 Building the situation network from Scene B

A couple of patterns that happen to be recurring throughout "Let's Play" videos already begin to make themselves apparent in this scene. All the streamers I have followed for the duration of this research have at one point or another reminisced on the issue of having to think through gameplay simultaneously while talking in a manner that has to make sense to their audience and the consensus is that is not easy. Even when not addressing the viewers directly it is not like they simply verbalize their actions within the game to fill in the silence. This two-layered thinking has its own set of demands, some of the side effects of which can be witnessed above. The first is the frequent use of placeholder terms for objects and events in the game world – thing, stuff, etc. This is of course often due to lack of information. For example in the scene earlier Odd has no way of knowing what exactly is throwing lightning at him as he is encountering this enemy type for the first time. However he should have plenty of words for the swinging blades that he speculates will knock the enemy over yet they also end up being referred to as "things" in stanza 10. So placeholders are indeed widely used to cover for various names and terms that cannot be evoked while your mind is focused on manipulating your avatar in-game.

The other side effect can be seen in a characteristic splicing of two sentences meant to describe a gameplay event as in "can he not hit me from here". Obviously the last word should be "there", but since it is the character's position that determines the result being described, i.e. being outside of an enemy's range, "here" is indeed the term Odd has in mind. However, the gameplay event itself begins at the enemy's position, which is what determines the overall structure of the sentence being such that it can no longer accommodate what the player intends to say at the end. Surely mistakes like this can happen in any conversation, but the reader will notice there is no sign that Odd himself acknowledges it, and there is no subsequent effort made to correct it.

What I termed "side effects" are therefore also examples of the situated meanings of certain words and phrases that are particularly important to the situation – "thing/things", "here/there", which if taken by themselves and stripped of the context are no more than some of the most basic vocabulary there is. Yet within the context of the gameplay they stand in for the both the key players in the situation and its most crucial aspects like their positions. As such – perhaps surprisingly so – in this particular scene these simple words count among the answers to Gee's main question about the world building task, namely "What are the situated meanings of some of the words and phrases that seem important in the situation?" (Gee, 1999, p. 93).

Furthermore, the language Odd uses in the second scene also serve to develop the activity building task taking place in the situation, and more specifically "dealing with" the enemies the game has populated the area with to complicate the platforming required from the player. Removing the

lightning bolt caster and the swordsman at the end of the bridge are the main objectives of two of the sub-activities Odd declared in the previous scene and is in the process of enacting in order to advance his main activity of getting across said bridge. "Using arrows" was the decisive action that propelled both forward albeit in an unexpected fashion in the caster's case. Odd's solution for the other lizardman is (as previously discussed) likely a direct result of connecting this problem to the "lesson" about using traps against the enemies as presented by the game in the first room of Sen's Fortress, and which would have been an example of connection building across the interaction, had he explicitly talked about it. Hence we will focus on this later as that task becomes a lot more relevant in the scenes to follow.

8.2.5 Scene C

Stanza 15

The camera moves to look into the dark depths of the pit again, this time going all the way to observe the part immediately under the platform's edge. At the bottom it reveals the shape of a large, twisted figure. Odd has seen this shape once before.

40   CO: Oh, look at that!
41   CO: That's another one of those big uhh .. stone demon things! //

As before the third time Odd switches frames is to call his audience's attention to something specific, though in this case it is hard to miss the subject of his comments. The demon is massive, but since it is positioned so close to the wall behind them, it is impossible to see unless the player looks directly down over the edge. The faint sound of footsteps can suddenly be distinguished among the ceaseless clanking noise of the swinging blades. Odd turns the camera towards the small balcony to the left of the platform where an item still shines softly waiting to be acquired. However, now there is also a lizardman there – the same one who attempted to go through the blades a while ago.

Stanza 16

42   CO: Oh, he came all the way up here! //

Odd is clearly surprised by this development. His words ("*all the way*") reveal he did not expect the balcony to be providing a connection to the lower level of the area. The creature jumps down and Odd moves his character to that side of the platform to face it, while still pondering the logistic skills of his opponent.

43   CO: Oh, they actually did find a way, good for them! //

Stanza 17

A swordfight begins. Odd blocks the first attack with his shield; his first scimitar swing does get through, but the second one is blocked by the enemy's shield. Odd pulls back a bit, the enemy's swipe does not reach him and leaves the creature open to a counterattack. Odd goes for a two-hit flip with his scimitar, which lands, but also gets hit at the end of the animation as the attack fails to stagger the enemy who delivers another swing of their own.

44 CO: <u>Damn it</u>! //

In Dark Souls staggers depend on a statistic called poise. Bigger and more heavily armoured enemies have more poise making up for what they lack in speed. Similarly weapons the wielding of which is governed by the strength attribute do more poise damage compared to those governed by the dexterity attribute, such as the scimitar Odd is using.

Odd moves backwards again, avoiding a head bite and the enemy's next swing. He drinks an estus flask, blocks an attack, lands one of his own, blocks another blow, gets yet another hit through, and quickly follows it with an additional swing, which kills the enemy before they can retaliate. Odd receives the souls for the kill.

Stanza 18

45 CO: Now where's your <u>counterpart</u> though? //

The player makes a mistake here. He has already received the souls for the second enemy that fell in the pit. Odd's reasoning seems to be that if one enemy survived the fall, the other should too, especially since the swinging blade did more damage to the first lizardman then he did with his arrows to the second one. However he misses a couple of things to factor in – casters generally have less health than warriors and the bridge that caster fell from was much higher than the one Odd is currently trying to cross. Either way he obviously failed to take note of the souls received earlier and spends a few seconds looking around the area for an enemy that is no longer there.

Stanza 19

Eventually, Odd goes back to the bridge and quickly moves through the first two blades to the safe spot he already knows exists between numbers two and three. However, on his next move he visibly hesitates whether he should attempt to remain between the third and fourth blades, and wait for the next swing, or go all the way through. But there is no time for such deliberations – the third blade promptly hits him and sends him flying down into the pit.

46 CO: <u>O:h</u>!
47 CO: I'm <u>dead</u>! //

8.2.6 Building the situation network from Scene C

This scene is a somewhat uneventful one in terms of language-in-use as most of it revolves around Christopher Odd fighting the lizardman who found his way to Odd's location, and as such provides only some incremental contributions towards the world and activity building tasks. Apart of a quick curse whenever they receive an unexpected hit – as is the case here, or the occasional taunt, and perhaps a winning (or losing) exclamation at the end, there is not much that most players will usually comment upon while in combat with regular enemies. There are of course exceptions to the rule (for ex. Masterkizz' entire approach to narrating the game is radically different) and this changes substantially whenever a special enemy is encountered and especially in boss fights, but this sword-wielding creature is neither.

What does stick out from the few uttered lines is the continuing use of placeholders – "things" again this time referring to the demons – and Odd suddenly adopting gender-neutral pronouns "they" and "them" when speaking of his enemy in stanza 16, which contrasts with the male "he" and "him" he used throughout the previous scene for both creatures. It is unclear what prompts the correction (and if it is indeed a correction) – perhaps he simply realized that he has no actual information about that, or it was purely an accident. Generally in video games, which feature predominantly inhuman enemies and NPCs it is anyone's guess what their proper genders might be[26] and as such attributing either pronoun is something of a random process, frequently affected by rough perception of primary or secondary sexual characteristics from the entity's design. However it is also the case that once the players use one or the other they tend to stick with it.

8.2.7 Scene D

Stanza 20

He is not dead. At the moment of the fall several things happen almost simultaneously. As the body of the character hits the ground the swirling camera reveals that the titanite demon (which

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[26] The lore of Dark Souls in fact reveals the casters as being female and the swordsmen as male – formerly human priestesses and their guardians transformed by experiments.

is the proper name of that creature) begins crawling towards Odd who lands only a few steps away. At the same time his health once again dips to "one hit from death" levels, while a lightning bolt coming from an unclear source narrowly misses him and showers the ground with sparks. Naturally, Odd has some choice words for these developments:

48 CO: Oh, <u>shit</u>!
49 CO: O:h, <u>shit</u>! //

Stanza 21

Without even having time to express surprise or happiness that he survived the fall, he rolls behind the bridge pillar next to him as to position it between himself and the approaching monster upfront. Prioritising threats he does not bother to look for whoever is casting the lightning bolts or whether his current position breaks line of sight with them. He knows that once the demon reaches him he is likely done for, so this enemy occupies his full attention. Odd drinks an estus flask while the creature's head slowly appears behind the stone column. He makes a couple of steps as to move behind the other side of the pillar, but said steps do not feel right.

50 CO: Why am I like .. <u>drudgingly slow</u> in here?! //
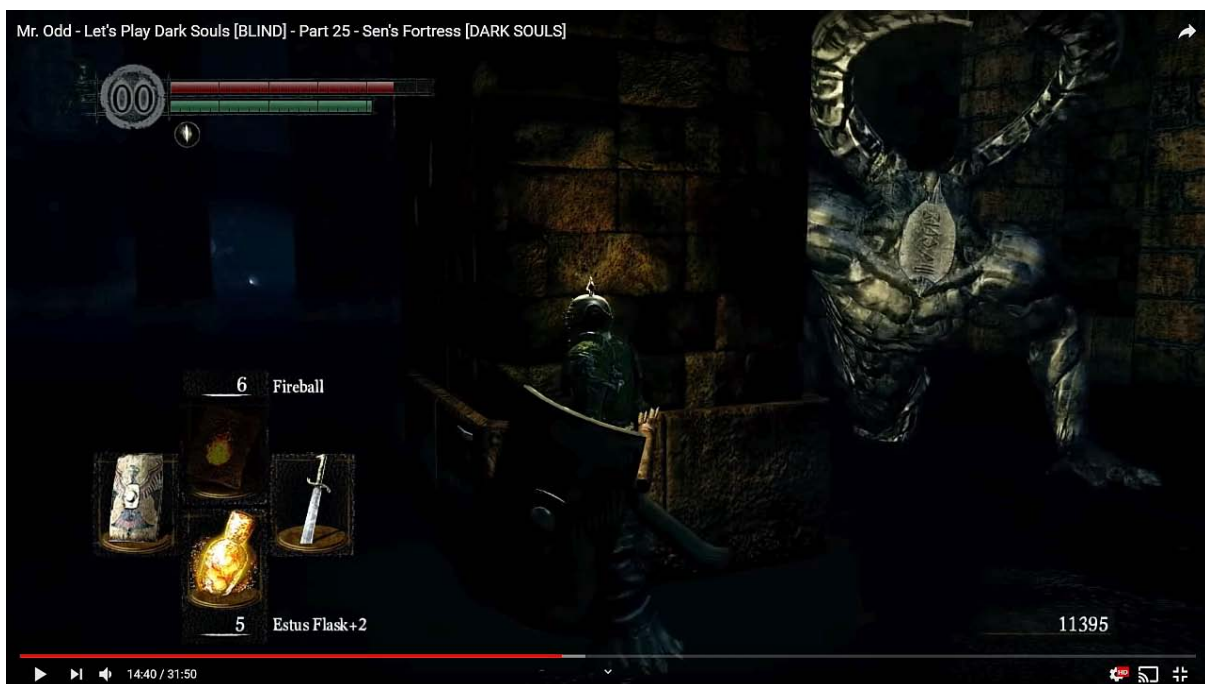
Figure 7: At the bottom of the pit.

Stanza 22

It would appear that the bottom of the pit is covered in some tar-like substance that has detrimental effect on movement. Normally the titanite demons crawl slowly enough that players can just outrun them whenever they decide to, but not so much here. Odd changes direction behind the pillar once again attempting to keep the obstacle between him and the demon, but it is clear that this can only last for so long and he is running out of time. Looking around his surroundings he notices a small archway in the corner and suddenly puts several pieces of information together.

51 CO: You know <u>what</u>?
52 CO: I'm <u>outta</u> here! //
53 CO: That guy <u>made it</u> back up
54 CO: so can <u>I</u>! //

He begins running in something of a slow motion towards the archway and manages to reach it without taking hits from lightning bolts in the back, or the demon's long staff sweeping through the air behind him. Through the archway is a small room, with naught but a ladder on one of the walls. Odd wastes no time to jump on it releasing the breath he apparently kept in for a while.

Stanza 23

55 CO: (exhales) OK at least it's <u>not</u> a sudden death. //

He keeps going up the ladder, while his mind returns to what is actually a nonissue as it is related to a certain omission he made earlier.

56 CO: But I do wonder where that <u>other one</u> went.
57 CO: That was .. that we knocked off the .. <u>the top</u>.
58 CO: That was <u>lunging</u> the lightning attacks at us. //

As I explained earlier that enemy is already dead and the fact that Odd being unaware of this does not explore a possible connection with the lightning attacks that occurred immediately after his fall from the bridge suggests that he might have entirely blanked on those in the heat of the action.

Stanza 24

As he reaches the top of the ladder, Odd knows where he is going to appear at. Surviving the fall from the bridge has allowed him the opportunity to collect an item he had no way of accessing previously.

59 CO: <u>Actually</u> this kinda works ..
60 CO: because now I can get <u>this thing</u>. //

He picks up the loot and the game informs him of the contents:

61   DS: Large Soul of a Proud Knight

Odd jumps down from the balcony and once again goes to the beginning of the bridge with the swinging blades.

8.2.8 Building the situation network from Scene D

The action in this scene changes dramatically together with the space it is taking place in, following Odd's fall into the pit at the end of the last scene. Similarly the language Odd uses to build the situation network focuses almost entirely on connection building this time around, with his lines in stanzas 22, 23 and 24 harkening back to events that took place in scenes C, B and A respectively. First, suddenly faced with both a very strong enemy and unfavourable fighting conditions – the use of the word "drudgingly" is an evocative expression, which reveals that the character appears to be exercising a significant effort just to walk – he does not really have to explain his decision to run away. Nevertheless does it by following the example so to speak of the lizardman who also survived their fall in the pit prior to him. Afterwards, as I mentioned earlier, he makes a mistake referring to the caster enemy and the events that led to their (unaccounted for by Odd) demise. And lastly, line 60 makes very clear, albeit implicitly so, the connection with that moment early on in scene A, where Odd took notice of the item on the balcony only to realize he has no way of acquiring it just yet.

Meanwhile, with the exception of line 50, the world building taking place in scene D is more subtle. For example line 55 reveals Odd's thoughts on his fall in the sense that he fully expects to be doing it again soon, but is no longer particularly worried about that as it does not mean an instant death ("sudden death" is uttered erroneously – the term is used exclusively for a rule applied in NBA and some other professional sports). It further relates to the general fear of the players of Dark Souls of falling from anywhere in the game world, even if after many hours of gameplay most should be well aware of what should be a safe distance to do so. It could very well be that the lizardman Odd used the swinging blades to push into the pit was placed there also so that the players who utilized the traps in their favour can eventually realize that the lower level is safe to access insofar the falling damage is concerned at least.

Finally, the activity building also shifts its focus in this scene as all the main objective of this segment – getting across the bridges – is replaced temporarily by the necessity to get out of the tight spot the fall has placed the player in above anything else. In a somewhat unusual manner, that goal

is communicated directly to the audience by the streamer through the frame switch occurring in line 51.

8.2.9 Scene E

Stanza 25

62   CO: OK. Let's just .. take it <u>slow</u>. //

Surely hoping that third time is a charm, Christopher Odd faces the swinging blades once again. As before he goes past the first two in one swift move and stops at the safe spot afterwards. The uttered line suggests that he does not intend to do anything rash.

63   CO: I almost <u>wonder</u>
64   CO: if I should try to get through <u>both</u> of these
65   CO: at the <u>same time</u>. //

It would appear that the distance between the third and fourth blades is longer than the first and second ones, but shorter than the second and the third. This makes it uncertain whether there is in fact a safe spot between them, or if it is just the illusion of such a space. Yet it could also be too long to run through in one go. Hesitation at precisely that point was what sent Odd down the pit the previous time and he surely does not want to visit the titanite demon again. It is interesting that Odd uses the same "I almost wonder" structure to present his potential solution as he did in Scene B. The literal reading of this would suggest that he does not trust completely his own ideas, but it could also just be an expression that has presently found its way into his mind and is quick to appear in similar circumstances. Be that as it may the alternative solution turns out to be the right one once more and Odd rushes through the last two blades successfully. He thus answers his own question:

66   CO: <u>Yep</u>. //

Stanza 26

The player continues over the bridge, but stops after a few steps. The camera fixates on the glow of another item similarly perched on another balcony, but this time on the right side of the pit and positioned lower than the bridge he is currently on.

67   CO: Now <u>how</u>…
68   CO: OK, I guess there's <u>a room</u> back there, so maybe…
69   CO: I can find a way <u>around</u>? //

He is clearly evoking a similar situation to what took place earlier when he climbed back up from the pit. It is often that players associate the retrieval of such temptingly positioned items with jumping to said position from some convenient point. Other players sometimes even make practical, malicious jokes of those instincts by putting down a message in such spots, claiming that jumping from here may yield treasure, or access to a secret location, when in fact all it will result in is certain death. The bridge Odd is on may be too far, but the one above could present such a point. However he is essentially saying here that he is not going to entertain such thoughts.

Stanza 27

There is one last swinging blade remaining between him and the platform at the bridge's end. Certainly it is no problem to cross on its own – it could have been if there was still a lizardman waiting behind it – and so Odd finally finds himself on the other end in a timely fashion. This is where in most video games players would likely save their game, but alas there are no such luxuries in Dark Souls. Odd instead goes to the right of the platform – more of a narrow corridor formed by a parapet across the edge of the pit, with statues of knights along its other wall – and rolls into some vases to break them, echoing his very first action in the beginning of this segment. The speed of the rolling animation makes him stop in his tracks however.

70 CO: Why am I all of a sudden rolling <u>really</u> slowly? //

This is incorrect insofar it is not "all of a sudden" – he has been "heavy rolling" throughout this segment, however it is only coming to his attention now. He tries is out one more time.

71 CO: Like what <u>happened</u>? //

Stanza 28

He opens the inventory screen. At this point Odd is already aware of the existence of a game mechanic that governs the speed of dodge moves depending on the weight of equipped items. As the weight does not affect walking or running speeds of the character, this may remain unnoticed until a combat situation arises at which point it will suddenly present an unexpected and unwelcome complication.

72 CO: Oh, I bet you it's my <u>shield</u>! //

Odd seems to have located the source of the issue almost right away. Prior to entering Sen's Fortress he likely tweaked his equipment at the bonfire, but did not calculate the weight values very well. He equips a smaller shield trading some of its defensive properties for lower weight and does another roll on the ground – it is indeed faster (there are only three stages of rolling speed with very

significant differences between them). The mechanic is thus somewhat crude as even a few grams of extra virtual weight can make the character handle like a truck while dodging.

73   CO: Yeah that my shield just put me <u>right</u> over the limit I guess //

Stanza 29

Having resolved that problem Odd moves on to explore the left side of the corridor where he finds a stairwell going up and to his left. He hesitates for a second then turns back.

74   CO: And let me <u>see</u>,
75   CO: because we know there's a <u>room</u> down there,
76   CO: maybe there's <u>secret walls</u>? //

He is referring to the location of the item he saw from the bridge earlier and another Dark Souls mechanic where illusions are placed instead of actual walls in the environment and need to be hit or rolled into to reveal the path. It does make sense to look for one here as the dead end to the right is somewhat suspicious and relatively close to where that balcony is positioned. Of course the actual path could connect from anywhere as he presently has no knowledge of the building's layout apart of this hall. He returns to the right end of the corridor and swings at the walls a few times with no result, and then heads back to the staircase, explaining further his reasoning.

Stanza 30

77   CO: Apparently I missed some secret walls in <u>Blighttown</u>. //
78   CO: In <u>the big tree</u> or something? //

He is referring to an earlier area of the game where clearly some of his viewers have taken upon themselves to reveal some of that location's secrets in the comments. The walls in question are particularly tricky as two are placed one after the other in a giant tree, and the only clue the game gives the player that those may exist there at all is the fact that the tree just looks like it is too important to contain only the small hollow the players initially discover. While some walls serve just to hide a rare item or two, in that case it is a path to a whole area of the game, which the designers have evidently decided to allow access to only to those who pay sufficient attention to their own intuition. It is precisely decisions like these that seem to foster a lot of cooperation from players of the game and viewers of its playthroughs – Dark Souls hosts a multitude of secrets that are both truly meaningful and well hidden[27].

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[27] In fact the DLC for the console version of the first game – meaning content that people have paid money to own, happens to be accessed by means so complex and obscure that the specialized media had to explain everything in detail upon its release. It is perhaps the sole case of video game content that those who have

8.2.10 Building the situation network from Scene E

The penultimate scene in this segment is among the more varied ones in terms of building the situation network, so I will go through all the building tasks in order, while skipping the semiotic one, as the sign systems and ways of knowledge in play remain the same here as in the first scene where I discussed them previously. First and foremost the main activity as posited by the game's design for this area has finally been completed as Odd managed to cross the bridge while avoiding the blades in his path. It is replaced by a follow-up overarching activity – one of exploration, which is signified by the discussion in stanza 26. As is often the case Dark Souls uses carefully positioned loot to attract the player's attention, so they can set some optional goals for exploration and at the same time confirm whether a given location is indeed accessible, as it could very well be that the balcony the item is on is just a set dressing. While exploring the corridor after the bridge however this main activity sprouts several branches. Firstly, Odd realizes that he needs to optimize his load in order to perform exploration more efficiently; and secondly the architecture of the space makes him think there may be secret walls in the area as proposed in lines 74-76.

In doing so Odd also uses the phrase "secret walls" to perform world building in the situation as this concept has a very specific meaning thoroughly embedded in the game world of Dark Souls. The phrase further becomes a part of the connection building process in the next stanza as it relates to events that have taken place previously in another area of the game. However, lines 77 & 78 also make another connection apparent.

A key part of the production loop of any "Let's Play" video series on the streamer's part (the extent to which this is doen of course depends on the streamer in question) is implementing viewer feedback into the playthrough. Even if the streamer as a player does not feel that following specific suggestions fits their playstyle (for ex. one who focuses more on the story elements within a game may not be interested in pursuing the collectibles spread throughout the levels whereas for a "completionist"[28] it would be the other way around) some of them do want to show that they listen to their viewers. So once they recall a given idea they tend to try to implement it as much as possible before events in the game sweep them away and refocus their attention yet again. When Odd says

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purchased it may be unable to play at all unless they or the community at large manage to figure out the correct sequence of actions and comprehend the relevant lore elements, which can lead them there.

[28] As per dictionary.com a completionist is "a player who attempts to complete every challenge and earn every achievement or trophy". Collectibles are a widespread way of creating such challenges and achievements.

"apparently" in line 78 he is referring to about two dozens of comments on that topic left under the respective episode, and while the idea is still fresh in his mind he will be on the lookout for those. A very similar story played out in Kay's playthrough except she did find the secret wall in this area – accidentally her first one. Sometimes the attempts to pursue viewer feedback may backfire, since if they recall the idea in the wrong context, either due to misunderstanding what the viewers have in mind, or what affordances the game provides for the proposed actions, lots of time may be wasted in attempting the erroneous "affordance – effectivity" fit.

Therefore, in stanzas 29 and 30 Odd also performs what Gee terms socio-culturally situated identity and relationship building in this segment. The identity he puts forward is of one who listens to their audience and values their suggestions. Every time Odd does this in his LPs he stabilizes this identity and the relationship he is developing with that LP's viewers within the context of the culture of the affinity space that is his YouTube channel. This in turn results in more viewer participation, which results in more ideas to implement, and so on – essentially oiling the wheels of the machine of knowledge exchange that is the affinity space. It is fairly easy to see how the adoption of such an approach may account for some of the significant differences between the spaces in terms of what is being shared there, which we established in the previous chapter. That is if indeed it is absent from the other playthrough of course.

8.2.11 Scene F

Stanza 31

The staircase ends with a small archway to the left that opens into another bridge with yet another set of four swinging blades preventing the player from simply walking across. This is where the lightning bolt caster was originally standing at. It looks like the bridge might be somewhat more narrow than the one crossing underneath, but it is something else that catches Odd's attention.

79 CO: Oh, these ones look like they might be .. <u>quicker</u>?//

Odd does not wait around this time and goes through the first blade right away.

80 CO: <u>Maybe not</u>. //
81 CO: O:h, <u>shit!</u>//

Going through the second blade Odd seems to have fully taken in the blending of the narrow bridge and the increased height he is required to perform his platforming at.

82 CO: I'm actually <u>physically</u> uncomfortable being up here! //

This time the switch of the frame wants to call attention to his psychological state rather than an aspect of the game world, though of course the two are inextricably related. Exploring new ground in Dark Souls tends to put players more and more on edge the further they get from the bonfire they have started at as every challenge they conquered in the meantime will have to be redone if they fail further down the path. The changes in the bridge's size, the speed of the blades, the height of the platforms, while subtle, gradually serve to amplify that tension.

Stanza 32

83 CO: Now those two...
84 CO: I think I'm gonna have to...

Similar to stanza 25 earlier he is considering going through the last two blades of the set at the same time. And much like before it turns out to be the right decision.

85 CO: <u>Ya</u>. //

With that last word Odd is now past all the blades and finally appears to be out of danger.

Stanza 33

In front of him is a small room with the same knight statues from the corridor below stacked around the walls and a chest in the middle, opposite of the entrance. The game seems to be saying "Well done, here is your reward!" But the game is Dark Souls after all and so the moment Odd sets foot into the space a question is suddenly brought forward. "But do you remember that thing about the floor?"

86 CO: <u>Wow</u>!
87 CO: <u>Shit</u>! //

A burst of three arrows flies out from a notch in the wall just behind the chest, piercing the air and disappearing through the door. Odd sounds completely caught off guard, but his character is unscathed as he made his entrance somewhat diagonally to the left and therefore the trap barely misses him.

88 CO: Ohohoh <u>Jesus</u>! //

Stanza 34

Odd goes to the chest and opens it, while his mind still seems to be echoing with disbelief over what just happened, producing one exclamative utterance after another.

89 CO: Oh, <u>man</u>! //
90 DS: Large Titanite Shard x2
91 CO: Large tita-
92 CO: There we <u>go</u>! //

The reaction suggests that the reward has been worth the effort. Upgrading one's gear is crucial to long term success in every such game and in Dark Souls gear requires different types of titanite the higher the target gear level is. Large titanite shards like those found in the chest are what is needed for the second tier of upgrades and evidently have been a very rare find up until now. Odd quickly opens the inventory menu.

93 CO: See that's what I <u>need</u>! //

He finds the item in the list and reads its basic description without opening the detailed lore panel.

94 DS: +10 reinforce: standard weapon. +5 reinforce: raw weapon.
95 CO: Now that I have a couple of them I can upgrade my falchion even more, <u>if I want</u>. //
96 CO: I probably <u>should</u>. //

The excitement from the upcoming upgrade of the character has replaced the shock from the trap from just a moment ago just as quickly as that shock replaced the fear of heights making him "physically uncomfortable" a few moments before. It is Dark Souls at its most banal, which is to say a roller coaster of questions and answers, riddles and solutions, situations and emotions. It is a ride that the audience of this playthrough is going to continue being a part of, as Odd goes through the other exit of the room to face his next challenge. However, this is the stop where we get off as in doing so he completes the gameplay segment.

8.2.12 Building the situation network from Scene F

The last scene opens up by essentially resetting the main activity for the segment – it turns out that there is another set of swinging blades the player needs to go through successfully in order to progress. While the lack of enemies makes the task somewhat easier this time around, the small changes to various elements in the setup as discussed above create the impression that the difficulty has actually escalated. It is through his comments on this very fact that Odd lays another important block in the process of identity and relationship building in the situation network. By using the word "physically" and emphasizing it the way he does he creates the sense in his audience that he has a

deep relationship with the character's perspective and that in moments like these he fully inhabits it. This is the identity of someone who is completely immersed in the game's world, which will matter a lot to those who treasure this title. It is also of one who is not afraid to share it with his peers when said immersion makes them vulnerable, which should resonate with anyone who seeks to form a more empathic connection with the content creator (Brown, 2012).

Once the platforming is completed successfully, the next – and last – activity that takes place in this segment is acquiring the treasure in the chest waiting in that final room. At this point there is no need for Odd, or any other player really, to comment on that act – it is self-explanatory that if there is a chest, it will be opened more or less immediately upon being encountered. It is later in this same fortress that Dark Souls will cast a shadow even on this most trivial action, by introducing – dozens of hours of gameplay in – the first "mimic" chest that has a high chance of killing the player's character when they open it. It is one of the few occasions where many have accused the game's design of outright cruelty as this happens after not only the events in this segment, but also multiple other challenges have been overcome, while there is still no access to a bonfire for the players to save their progress at. The trap in this room then is something of an early warning of things to come, while all the exclamations uttered by Odd in stanza 33 after narrowly avoiding it, serve to reinforce this world as a dangerous and unforgiving place. In this segment and in any other conversation with the game, the software renders the player as a prey to each and every one of its devices, something explored in more detail in Bertozzi's "The Feeling of Being Hunted" (2014).

Odd's comments on the contents of the chest as seen in stanza 34 present us with one last bit of world building as they reveal the significant value attached to some of the rewards Dark Souls eventually hands out. In a game that so aggressively attacks the player at every step of their journey, anything that can make one's life is easier is more than just welcome – it is needed, as Odd himself stresses in line 93, while the last couple of lines hint at the frequently difficult decision how to use the rare gifts of the game. Upgrade materials can be used on any gear and the choice is complicated by the fact that the player does not know if they are not going to find a better base item relatively soon, or if they should just keep upgrading what they already have. Hence why when Odd says – somewhat in passing – that he "probably should" upgrade the falchion this is not an answer to some rhetorical question, but rather a statement of careful consideration. Evidently he feels that he lacks the necessary damage output to comfortably fight the opponents in this area, so he is probably not going to wait on a better weapon to present itself. But this is something for him to ponder further down the line, whereas we are about to move on to a different journey through the halls of Sen's Fortress – different in more than one way.

8.3 Laughing in hell

It is only when I got to watching Masterkizz' segments in full that I realized the extent to which the streamer's approach to the game-generator may differ from the baseline as I imagined it. Indeed for a minute it actually made me question my tool of choice for data analysis. While Discourse analysis does an excellent job in exploring situated meanings within stories and conversations, the way it structures the monologues and dialogues requires a certain rhythm to be present in order to be applied optimally. And it is just this rhythm that is largely absent from Masterkizz' narration, as he rapidly changes the subjects of his attention, sometimes even in-between his own comments, which results in frequent single-line stanzas, interrupted trains of thought, unfinished phrases, etc. On one hand this makes the results in terms of knowledge transactions in his affinity space as observed earlier fairly straightforward to understand, but on the other it does require adapting my application of Discourse analysis somewhat, since it is fruitless to attempt and produce an orderly text while following the overlapping elements and zigzagging flow of the transcript. Therefore, instead of having the analysis performed in part during the scene descriptions, stanza per stanza, and then building the situation network from each scene, I will split the contents of his transcript per scene and attach them under each respective part with a slightly simplified notation as I did not find much use for emphases and final idea units here.

Let me see where to begin. The first and most obvious difference with all other streamers is that Masterkizz talks a lot more. For what is essentially the same duration of gameplay he ends up producing almost twice the number of lines compared to Odd who comes in a distant second place. Naturally, this increases the number of stanzas as well, even though it is not a one to one relationship. One could argue that his segment is somewhat more dynamic compared to the others as a lot more of it is spent in combat, which takes place at the bottom on the pit, but that is only a part of the whole picture. Indeed, the scenes that take place within the segment are only seven: 1) he arrives in the hall with the swinging blades and attempts to go across the bridge; 2) he falls down in the pit and kills the pursuing lizardman; 3) he hides in the tunnel and equips the Rusted Iron Ring; 4) he goes through the passage to his left only to find another Titanite Demon and run back to the tunnel; 5) he enters a prolonged combat with the first Titanite Demon, trying several approaches and ultimately killing the creature; 6) he briefly attempts to fight the casters on the platform above the tunnel, but has no health and the position is bad so he quits that; and 7) he locates the ladder

leading out of the pit and finds the illusory wall on the balcony, using it to complete the segment. But before I go ahead and break these down to discuss the relevant building tasks, I need to go into something else first.

At first glance everything points to the fact that Masterkizz is a pretty good player of Dark Souls. For one, the equipment he enters Sen's Fortress with is that of an Elite Knight. This means that he has either gone through a certain very difficult battle to acquire it, or realized that there is an opportunity to snatch the set right under the nose of its powerful guardians. He is also, as witnessed in the third scene, in possession of the Rusted Iron Ring, which means he has explored many of the previous areas pretty carefully, and furthermore he immediately makes the connection of how it should be used once he gets slowed down by the tar floor of the pit. By comparison Christopher Odd uses heavy armor pieces and a dexterity weapon (the falchion), which means that even his basic character build is far from optimal as these two things are governed by different attributes and the player has to split their skill points when they have accumulated enough souls to level up.

Later in his skirmish with the Titanite Demon Masterkizz attempts several different tactics like buffing (applying a beneficial effect to an item or character) his melee weapon with magic, using a bow once he realizes that the enemy cannot go through the pillars between them, and explicitly discusses the issues that he is not yet aware of this particular enemy's weaknesses. He also explores and reads his surroundings well – his first impulse upon entering the hall was to verify what lies down in the pit and that the distance is acceptable to fall in; he guessed correctly the second Titanite Demon's location; and found the illusory wall in the area without much trouble. All of this leads to the conclusion that he is a very well rounded player, who pays attention when necessary and has learned what the game has to teach him.

However, the methodical nature with which Masterkizz evidently approaches the gameplay, does not seem to translate to his performance as a streamer. This refers not only to the language he uses in the streamer <-> audience frame, but the substance of his playthrough when taken as a whole. Once his narration is layered on top of the player <-> game interactions it creates the impression that the proceedings are chaotic, his decisions impulsive, and that Dark Souls – who, if it were a human being would be a slow, deliberate speaker, who enunciates each one of their words very carefully – is having a conversation with someone suffering from ADHD. So let us try to reconstruct how Masterkizz builds the situation network for this segment through his narration and see whether Discourse analysis can shed some additional light onto how exactly are the various elements of this playthrough coming together.

8.3.1 Scene A

In the first scene the language is used to perform mainly activity and world building. As I have stated previously there is no need to discuss semiotic building beyond what I already did in part 8.2.2, because the relevant sign systems remain the same across all streamers, except KineticGTR who uses a web camera to record his performance for the duration of the playthrough. It is however a moment of connection building that stands out in the very first stanza, and that is Masterkizz evoking the "Prince of Persia" title. As far as 3D platforming goes this is probably the most popular title of the years prior to Dark Souls' release, which makes the comparison with the introduction of this type of design here apt. But it also immediately takes the viewer out of the gameplay itself as bringing another game into the conversation does little to improve immersion. Therefore, with his third line Masterkizz also hints at his identity as one of a seasoned gamer with potentially numerous other titles on his belt, yet one who does not particularly value the immersive quality of his "Let's Play" series.

Another peculiar connection building moment here is stanza 3, where Masterkizz explains that he has never been to this area before. Clearly his viewers who followed the playthrough up to this point should know that. Line 9 even features the emphasized word "again", which could be a reference to the fact that he has traversed repeatedly the other areas of the game prior to unlocking Sen's Fortress, or that he has indeed played Dark Souls up to a point before this playthrough. The latter should not be the case as in the description of the LP he states "I have always wanted to play this game and have heard numerous tales of the insanely frustrating difficulty level", which is also among the reasons I picked his channel for this research, since I only focus on these first-time, "blind" playthroughs. Whatever the case this is already the second time he cuts away from the player <-> audience frame in the first scene, both of which are not to call attention to a gameplay element like what Odd does, but instead to talk about a different game and his personal experience as a player of Dark Souls.

The last thing that stands out in the first scene takes place in stanza 6 where he enters combat with the lizardman on the opposite end of the bridge, after successfully going through all the swinging blades. Unlike Odd – and the majority of players for that matter – Masterkizz tends to try and comment on every single development of the fight even though all the events are very much visible on the screen. This has the unfortunate effect of having his narration "lag" behind the actual events as it is obviously impossible to produce speech as quickly as video game combat occurs. As a

result the action no longer feels coherent, since the gameplay interactions keep piling up. Much like in Odd's playthrough segment, attempting to cross the bridge without first removing the relevant enemies in the situation, conjures a hectic sequence of lightning bolts, melee attacks, but since Masterkizz decides not to go back, he ends up in the pit as well, with his enemy in tow, as he fails to realize there is no physical space to go around them. However, he takes care of that promptly in the second scene, after surviving the fall with what is likely to be the smallest amount of health points possible.

Stanza 1

1 MK: Oh, what… like…
2 MK: Swinging blades?
3 MK: Prince of Persia…

Stanza 2

4 MK: O:h, if we get knocked off…
5 MK: Oh what is that a titanite demon down there?
6 MK: It is!
7 MK: So it looks like if we get knocked off
8 MK: we'd probably fall down there I imagine.

Stanza 3

9 MK: Oh, again this is all new… for me, so…
10 MK: I've never been here,
11 MK: so I don't know what to expect.
12 MK: I don't know if something's gonna jump at…

Stanza 4

13 MK: I think we just…
14 MK: hope we get the timing
15 MK: and we just run through.
16 MK: That was not too bad.
17 MK: Here we go.

Stanza 5

18 MK: O:h, what the… [laughs]
19 MK: For real?
20 MK: O:h, now this… [laughs]
21 MK: lightning death?
22 MK: Oh man!

Stanza 6

23 MK: I tried to parry! [laughs]
24 MK: Oh he's gonna knock us off.
25 MK: O:h! We just walk off?!

8.3.2 Scene B

Using an estus flask to recover his health – and being very lucky in that instance as nothing else manages to hit his character in those two seconds – Masterkizz defeats the enemy that jumped after him in a quick exchange of blows and moves to hide from the lightning bolts aimed at him in a tunnel, which is located right under the corridor where Odd was looking for "secret walls" earlier. One of Masterkizz' comments about the lightning bolts – line 30 – reveals that in that moment he thinks their source is the Titanite Demon behind him ("the dude down here") – the same one who chased Odd out of the pit. This is actually another moment that reveals Masterkizz as a player who pays careful attention to the game's world and/or a very skilled player, as there is only one such demon prior to Sen's Fortress and he has either defeated that enemy, or observed his lightning attack as to memorize it and make the connection so quickly. Line 31 then has him realizing that the direction the attacks are coming from is a different one, so if it is a demon it has to be a second one. The other important moment in the scene is in line 32, where he makes the aforementioned link to the Rusted Iron Ring – here eloquently described as "that bloody ring" in the heat of the battle – and its properties to allow normal movement in unfavorable conditions. In terms of language-in-use this scene is predominantly about activity building, as Masterkizz spells out his actions line by line.
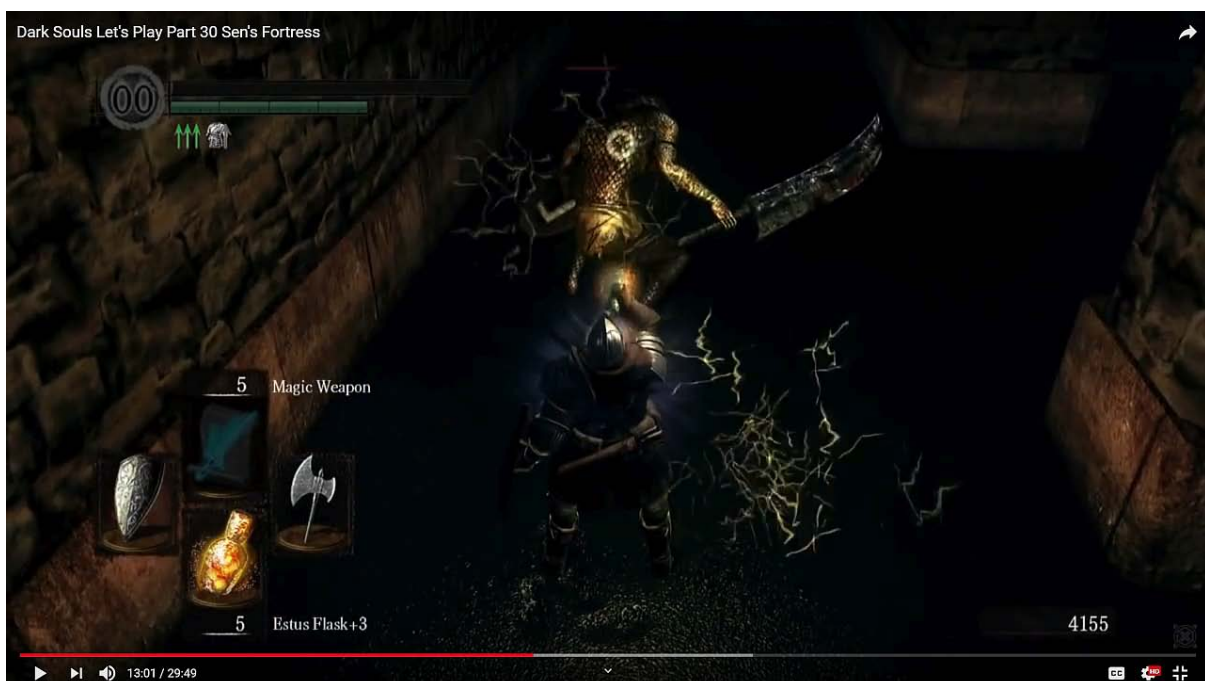
Figure 8: Drinking an estus flask amidst all the chaos

Stanza 7

26 MK: [laughs] Oh man, we survived!

27 MK: Oh, estus! [laughs]

Stanza 8

28 MK: Thought I could backstab him for a second there…

29 MK: A:h still electricity!

Stanza 9

30 MK: It must be the dude down here, is it?

31 MK: O:h what, there's another one there!

Stanza 10

32 MK: I'm gonna need the… uh… oh that bloody ring!

33 MK: I have to kill this guy first.

34 MK: Oh, you walk so slow here.

Stanza 11

35 MK: Got to… chop him again!

36 MK: There ya go!

8.3.3 Scene C

The lightning bolts coming from above are not the only reason Masterkizz seeks shelter in the tunnel – the Titanite Demon behind him is slowly making its way to the player. However Masterkizz is unable to move further down the tunnel as there is indeed a second Titanite Demon at the end, who does not seem to be seeing him just yet. In a later scene Masterkizz will explicitly point out that they are "definitely protecting something over here" (line 135), undoubtedly referring to the faint glow of loot by the demon's side. The player goes for another estus to recover the damage from the lightning bolts, and then – line 46 being him vocalizing his movements across the inventory menu – puts the Rusted Iron Ring on. However he has left the cover of the tunnel of fear the other demon will notice him so he is now visible to his enemies above, which results in more lightning bolts delivering damage to his character. Stanza 16 is where he returns to his discussion whether it is a third demon shooting those, or – he has the correct idea here – a caster enemy type. The "bloody things" in line 54 refers to the demons and the reason it is said as if it is an improbable explanation is that so many powerful enemies rarely (if ever) share the same area the way that their apparent positioning would suggest. As there are three in total (see scene D) this is still a lot, but if there were indeed more than that, this would reveal a designer's excess very uncharacteristic of Dark Souls.

Stanza 12

37 MK: OK this dude looks like he's after me man!

38 MK: Oh is this dude [unintelligible]

39 MK: Oh if he sees me
40 MK: he's gonna come after me too.

Stanza 13

41 MK: Da:mn!
42 MK: Estus you gonna have to…

Stanza 14

43 MK: O:h this is bad!
44 MK: He can probably get through there…

Stanza 15

45 MK: How quick can we go?
46 MK: Do… do… d-d-d-d-do!

Stanza 16

47 MK: Ah something's attacking me!

Stanza 17

48 MK: Rusted iron…
49 MK: We gotta…

Stanza 18

50 MK: A:h! I get death attacks!
51 MK: Alright that one's [unintelligible]

Stanza 19

52 MK: What is that up there man!
53 MK: Is it a caster?
54 MK: Or is this place just filled with these bloody things?

Stanza 20

55 MK: O:h, that almost got through
56 MK: and got me!

8.3.4 Scene D

Once that he has the ring on, Masterkizz attempts to explore the only other path he can see from his location. Both the tunnel and the area behind the pillars have Titanite Demons in them, so he opts for the dark passage to the left of his hiding place. This results in a moment of genuine comedy as he correctly, albeit jokingly, guesses that there will be another demon right behind the corner. Which brings me to another very prominent aspect of Masterkizz' LP performance – the man laughs a lot throughout his playthrough. This stands in stark contrast with the other three players who only react so whenever something genuinely funny or surprising occurs. Of course what does constitute "funny", or laughter-provoking is completely subjective and thoroughly dependent on

one's personality, but by covering most of his footage with a laughing track, so to speak, Masterkizz emphasizes the entertainment angle of his "Let's Play" above all else. The extent to which this is done portrays him as someone who is playing strictly to have the kind of easygoing fun that really does not seem to fit the grim virtual reality Dark Souls is designed to convey and in doing so nullifies any potential for immersion in that world and by extension in his own playthrough. Thus people who have had different experiences with the game and are looking to share them in the affinity spaces of YouTube channels will not find something to connect with here. It is another great example of reflexivity in action as language-in-use determines the context in which it is used. This is because while laughing technically constitutes a separate semiotic system from language, it is nevertheless one that is irrevocably fused with it (Dreyfus, Hood & Stenglin, 2011), and thus still falls within the boundaries of language-in-use. It is however so widespread in this segment that at least in terms of the semiotic building of the situation network, it would be a valid decision to categorize laughter as a third relevant sign system, next to the player's speech, and the audio-visual flow of the video game. Note that in the transcript the [laughing] tag is used only when explicit laughing instances occur, but there are numerous lines pronounced in a similar manner – I just did not add a special notation for it.

Stanza 21

      57 MK: Alright at least we can sneak and move now
      58 MK: with the rusted…

Stanza 22

      59 MK: Oh, no! Where are we…
      60 MK: O:h!

Stanza 23

      61 MK: Let me guess
      62 MK: there gonna be another one
      63 MK: behind this corner like…
      64 MK: Ehh! [laughs]
      65 MK: Agh! I told ya! [laughs]
      66 MK: Damn!
      67 MK: Now he's gonna be after me!

Stanza 24

      68 MK: O:h ridiculous damage!
      69 MK: [grunts] Estus!

8.3.5 Scene E

Still laughing at his predicament and one more estus to account for lightning bolt damage later, Masterkizz finds himself back at the tunnel's entrance in the beginning of this fifth scene. It is by far the longest scene in any of the playthrough segments, since here he tries to bring down the titanite demons blocking his way through the pillars, which when combined with his manner of narration, results in over 70 lines on his part. Again I will not go through the whole sequence stanza per stanza, but focus only on those parts that stand out. His first idea is to use magic to augment his weapon and so inflict additional damage on the demon with his attacks, which is smart as he does not get to land too many of those. For one the demon has a long range weapon that he needs to stay away from and he also needs to be aware of the lightning bolts aimed at his back every time he leaves the tunnel to approach the creature, which minimizes the time he can stay within his own attack range. Here Masterkizz accompanies the use of the spell by singing the refrain of some pop song about magic (line 73), once again building a connection to something well outside of the game world and thus the current situation. The frequency with which this occurs can be said to make the streamer's approach to narrating his gameplay an intertextual or inter-Discursive one (Gee, 1999).

Several lines later Masterkizz makes the observation that "I'm thinking I wasn't supposed to get knocked here". This makes a connection with the first scene and clarifies his perception at that time that not only is the pit accessible to jump in, but also that he was *supposed* to do so. Of course, as I explained some pages back, this word has a very situated meaning in Dark Souls and in other video games, as it refers to the path the designers of the game seem to have intended for the players to take. And while Dark Souls does not necessarily feature such intended paths, this reasoning does seem rather peculiar insofar the pit is also where the player ends up by failing the very much explicated platforming task set up on the bridge above. Well-versed in the language of Dark Souls as Masterkizz appears to be, he is also not immune to misinterpreting some of the affordances the game presents him with.

The rest of the scene oscillates between Masterkizz landing some of his attacks, while missing others; lamenting the small amounts of damage his weapons seem to inflict to his enemy; and drinking estus to restore the lost health points whenever the casters or the demon score some hits. At one point he realizes that the demon cannot go through the pillars for a fact and begins shooting arrows at them from a safe distance, but that quickly leads to the disapproving statement in line 97 "Super boring play!" Stressing on each word of this explicit frame switch, which shifts the attention specifically onto his own performance as a streamer, Masterkizz underlines the extent to which arrows are not the correct fit for this particular affordance despite allowing for safe play. Indeed the made of metal alloys enemy is all but immune to arrows, and to go through with this

approach will eventually take way too long to resolve a situation that does not necessarily prevent him from progressing with the game.
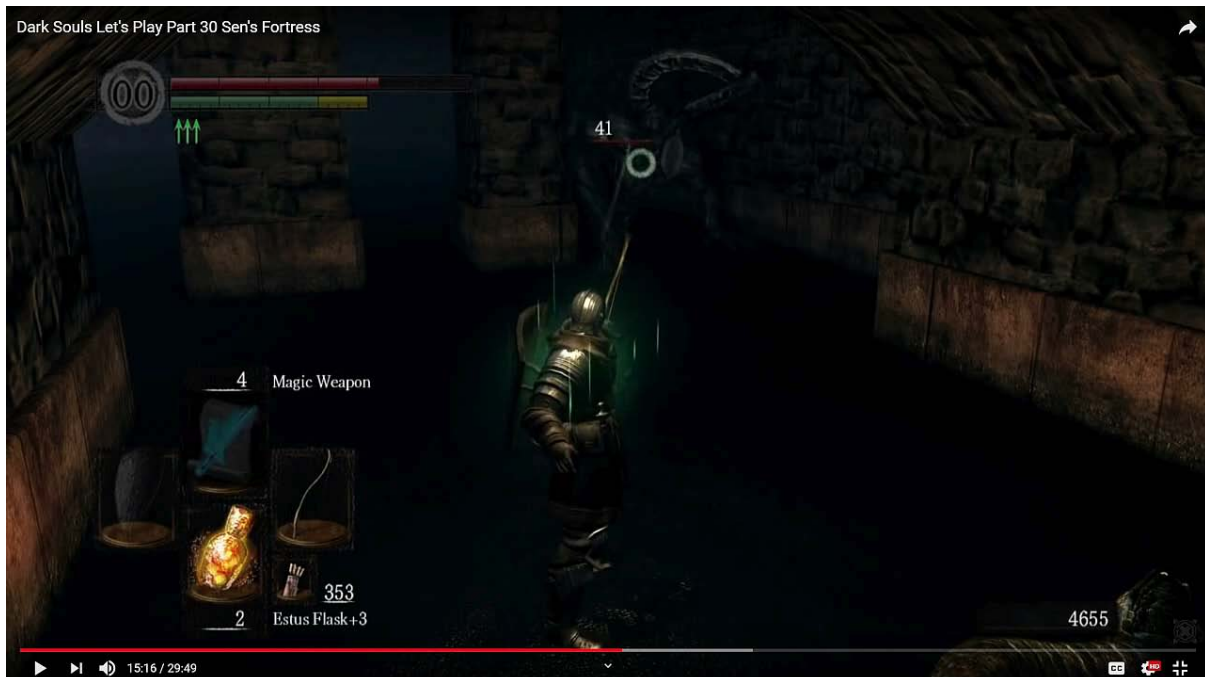
Figure 9: "Super boring play"

That is indeed the last strategy Masterkizz discusses in this scene (stanzas 46 & 47). One way players can retreat so to speak in Dark Souls is by using a consumable item called "Homeward Bone" one can occasionally find, which can be used to return to the last bonfire they have rested at. As Masterkizz explains in line 123, he is not too far from the bonfire, so he is not exactly losing too much progress by resetting the area. He brings this plan up as a viable option in light of his all but gone estus flasks, with the alternative being to use humanity (see 8.1.1) for healing purposes – and the latter is a much more rare and precious item than the Homeward Bone. Be that as it may he persists with fighting the demon and ultimately manages to put down the creature, for which he is awarded with 2000 souls and a piece of Demon Titanite – a very rare resource for upgrading weapons the kind of which players have no access to yet, meaning that going head to head with these enemies is far from optimal at this stage of the game.

There is an entertaining sequence immediately after the killing blow lands in that sequence (stanza 50), and it comes about when Masterkizz makes his character heal themselves one last time. But he is out of estus, which leads to the character first lifting the empty flask to their lips and then an animation of bewilderment playing out as they shake the empty flask with the bottom up. As the player has clearly not seen that before he appears just as confused as the character at first, and then

does one of those rare frame switches in line 134 where he speaks directly to the character rather than his viewers.

Stanza 25

> 70 MK: I'm just gonna have to fight him!
> 71 MK: Ah I wonder if I can get…
> 72 MK: can I get some magic?
> 73 MK: [sings] "Get real magic! Yaya!"

Stanza 26

> 74 MK: Now attack.
> 75 MK: Attack.

Stanza 27

> 76 MK: Oh k, get killed. Get k-
> 77 MK: good idea!

Stanza 28

> 78 MK: I can't strike through that…
> 79 MK: and the guy up here… [laughs]

Stanza 29

> 80 MK: I'm thinking I wasn't supposed to get knocked here, no.
> 81 MK: That's what I'm thinking.

Stanza 30

> 82 MK: Ugh.
> 83 MK: This guy just…
> 84 MK: I just can't do the damage.
> 85 MK: I'm hurting him,
> 86 MK: but it didn't do much…
> 87 MK: Ah, I should have…

Stanza 31

> 88 MK: Will he get through here?
> 89 MK: Does he get stuck there?
> 90 MK: Oh if he's stuck there
> 91 MK: you're eating arrows for years, mate!
> 92 MK: Ye:s, you are! [laughs]

Stanza 32

> 93 MK: Here we go!
> 94 MK: O:h, it barely does anything at all.
> 95 MK: I think it's the only way we gonna be able to get out of here alive though.

Stanza 33

> 96 MK: Look at him!

97 MK: Super boring play!

Stanza 34

98 MK: Oops, oops! [laughs]

99 MK: Oops! Oops! [laughs]

Stanza 35

100 MK: Oh I don't think he liked…

101 MK: I don't think he liked eating the arrows.

Stanza 36

102 MK: I don't know what their weakness is.

103 MK: Is the problem.

Stanza 37

104 MK: I just get a chop in and get back…

105 MK: No?

Stanza 38

106 MK: Ohh and these…

107 MK: What is that up there?! [laughs]

Stanza 39

108 MK: A:h… [laughs] Stop it!

109 MK: [laughs] Stop it!

Stanza 40

110 MK: Ah! Arghhh! Ugh! [laughs]

111 MK: I'm running out of estus!

112 MK: [laughs] Oh man!

Stanza 41

113 MK: This is not fair! [laughs]

Stanza 42

114 MK: Oh we blocked that one.

115 MK: Oh it staggered us.

Stanza 43

116 MK: One… Ah it just… Ugh…

Stanza 44

117 MK: A:h that's got such a range on it!

Stanza 45

118 MK: O:h man!

Stanza 46

119 MK: Alright see… I'm…

120 MK: I don't know…
121 MK: I don't think it's worth burning humanity
122 MK: trying to get out of here alive to be honest.

Stanza 47

123 MK: I'm fairly close to the bonfire,
124 MK: I know what to expect now
125 MK: when I come through, so…

Stanza 48

126 MK: I'll see if I can just chip this guy…
127 MK: I hope we can get him
128 MK: before he acts up
129 MK: with his lightning again.

Stanza 49

130 MK: There we go.

Stanza 50

131 MK: What the hell?
132 MK: A:h he's trying to…
133 MK: you can try and drink empty estus?
134 MK: O:h! [laughs] There's nothing left mate!

Stanza 51

135 MK: A:h this guy is definitely protecting something over here.

Stanza 52

136 DS: Demon Titanite
137 MK: Demon titanite.

8.3.6 Scene F

Having defeated his demonic adversary and now located in a safe from lightning attacks spot on the other side of the pillars, in this sixth scene Masterkizz shifts his attention to the enemies above him. Finally being able to see them for longer than a split second he decides on two things – that they are "crazy-looking dudes" (probably referring to the four arms these particular creatures have) and that he will try to enter ranged combat with them (lines 140 and 141). The problem with the latter is that "they know exactly where I am" – line 143 – which is something he also explicitly states he hates in the line before. The "hate" stems from the fact that as mentioned earlier he has no healing resources and cannot engage in combat freely. It is a statement of evaluation of the affordance/effectivity fit as applicable to his approach of choice in the context of his low resources rather than an emotional response to a gameplay event.
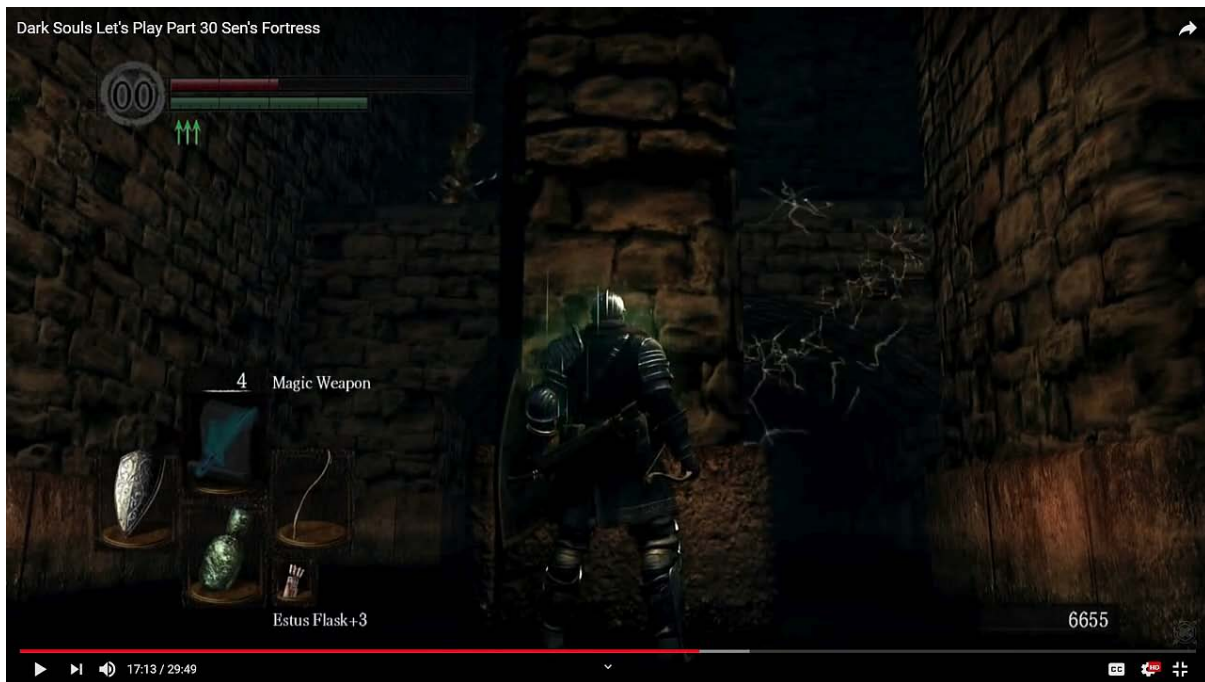
Figure 10: "Crazy-looking dudes"

Meanwhile "knowing" has a very situated meaning in this line, since it is referring to an AI-controlled character. Depending on the game, breaking line of sight with the enemy for a certain amount of time, usually results in them "forgetting" the player's location, which is accompanied by their AI switching to whatever its default position and/or behaviour is. In the this particular instance it means that if Masterkizz remains behind the pillar long enough without moving, the casters will seize throwing the lightning bolts at him, just as they did while he was in the tunnel earlier. What he implies by bringing this up is that he would be able to deal with the situation better had the time required for the enemies to "forget" him was lower. This way he thinks he would be able to deliver his bow shots without risking to be hit since usually one would presume that the act of noticing the player extends the time required for the enemy to react. However, Dark Souls appears to be programmed so that this is not a tactic that can be exploited even if the player is willing to partake in another case of a "super boring play" and snipe their opponents with a single arrow whenever the required interval expires. What seems to be happening instead is that the interval between two enemy attacks is exactly the same as the one between making "eye contact" and launching the first attack. In other words Masterkizz has nothing to gain from taking his time behind the pillar, but he seems to not be aware of that. And since taking damage is unavoidable either way, and the damage differential is far from being in his favor – as emphasized by the expletive-laden line 145 – he decides to save the last sliver of health on his bar, move out of the casters' range, and explore the other side of the pit.

Stanza 53

    138 MK: Alright.

    139 MK: Now what are these things?

    140 MK: O:h! We:ll they're like… cra:zy looking dudes!

Stanza 54

    141 MK: Wanna [see] how much damage they take from the bow.

Stanza 55

    142 MK: A:h I hate it,

    143 MK: cause they know exactly where I am.

Stanza 56

    144 MK: O:h they don't take much either!

    145 MK: Hell, damn, crap! [laughs]

    146 MK: O:h but they do stacks of damage!

Stanza 57

    147 MK: Alright the bow is not a viable option there.

8.3.7 Scene G

And so we reach the final scene in this segment where Masterkizz, much like Odd, immediately spots the small staircase in the corner and happily "embraces" the ladder there as witnessed by the repeated use of "good" in relation to it in stanza 60. Obviously one reason for stressing this is that the object in question will take him out of his current predicament on the bottom of the pit. But there is also a more literal yet locally situated to Dark Souls meaning behind why ladders are "good" as a matter of principle. One way the game makes an efficient use of its sparsely deployed bonfire checkpoints are the so-called shortcuts. I.e. the areas adjacent to the bonfires are laid out so that their labyrinthine nature allows for unexpected connections to these checkpoints, and that creates the somewhat odd situations where players progress by (sometimes repeatedly) returning to the area's starting point. And since the first Dark Souls game has a notably vertical level design, it is often the case that such a shortcut will take the shape of a ladder just like the one Masterkizz wastes no time to jump on.

While climbing it, there are two things that stand out among his comments. First he returns to his prior discussion to whether he should return to the bonfire or keep going, but then he seems to base his eventual decision on whether the good ladder will take him before or after the swinging blades (stanza 62). Indeed unlike Odd he has no way of knowing that the ladder goes to the balcony it does, because he has not seen an enemy using it. But it is strange he makes the comment that he does, as going back through the set of blades is clearly no problem for him. Furthermore he appears

to have forgotten about utilizing the "Homeward Bone" item I talked about earlier, even though one can see it present in his inventory earlier in the episode, which naturally was brought up by one of his viewers in the comment section.

Once at the balcony Masterkizz also collects the Large Soul of a Proud Knight located there, but unlike Odd he then takes into account the archway shape of the wall next to it. Line 168 is spoken as if he already knows the answer to the question it posits. Indeed it is an illusory wall and also Masterkizz' way out of the segment. His very last line 170 suggests he might have a knack for discovering the clues this particular gameplay mechanic involves. But these later scenes have also provided some hints that perhaps he is not that excellent of a player as he might have initially seemed. Though after analyzing these two very different playthrough segments, I think it is already safe to say that, the streamer's gameplay effectiveness form only a small part of the equation, at least insofar one seeks to promote knowledge exchange through said playthroughs.

Stanza 58
> 148 MK: Let's run this way!

Stanza 59
> 149 MK: Ah is that a [unintelligible] point up here?

Stanza 60
> 150 MK: What's this?
> 151 MK: Oh, oh, oh a ladder!
> 152 MK: Ladders are good! [laughs]
> 153 MK: [unintelligible] like a good ladder!

Stanza 61
> 154 MK: Ah man, sick, sick,
> 155 MK: [unintelligible], [unintelligible]…

Stanza 62
> 156 MK: Is it worth me running back to the bonfire?
> 157 MK: Because I think I can probably get there safely providing…
> 158 MK: where is this gonna lead me?
> 159 MK: Is this gonna lead me back up…
> 160 MK: behind the swinging blades
> 161 MK: or in front of the swinging blades?

Stanza 63
> 162 MK: Ah man!

Stanza 64
> 163 MK: Oh he's got some stuff what?
> 164 DS: Large Soul of a Proud Knight

165 MK: Large soul.
166 MK: Proud knight.
167 MK: Thank you!

Stanza 65

168 MK: Illusory?
169 MK: Yeah! [laughs]
170 MK: We got all the illusories! [laughs]

8.4 The Let's Play Performance Profile

Throughout this chapter I have aimed to acquire sufficient evidence in order to be able to answer the following research question:

What are the factors that contribute to enabling potential learning outcomes in the design of the video game that is used for an LP and the performative behaviour of the player who is making it?

In so doing the text does seem to provide us with enough information to draw the rough outline of what I have been referring to as the "Let's Play Performance Profile". Of course there are certain limitations to my approach to develop such a profile, as a truly thorough research would require a significantly larger sample size, but the Discourse analysis methodology makes it somewhat difficult to process vast amounts of qualitative data at least in the context of the study that is this PhD dissertation. Nevertheless, let us collect all the available pieces – including some of the things that became apparent over the course of the previous chapters – and see whether we can put this puzzle together and to what extent.

8.4.1 Channeling the wisdom of the crowd

First of all let me attend to the factors in video game's design that contribute to learning in YouTube channel-type affinity spaces again, even though this part has largely been covered in earlier chapters and there is nothing new to add here per se. Beyond the basic qualities commonly recognized in a "good" game, which I will not go into as these are way too many, what separates the Souls series from its peers is providing nonlinear experience, with a narrative that is never forced onto the player, thus interrupting the organic flow of the gameplay, and which takes place in a world

densely populated with functional elements. To understand that last statement just compare the 50 or so square meters of Sen's Fortress explored by the two players above with other open worlds, which often look beautiful, but are predominantly empty in terms of interactivity, and what is there tends to follow a easily recognizable functional patterns. For all their unique architectures all towns and villages in, for example "The Elder Scrolls" or "Assassin's Creed" games, operate exactly in the same way underneath, and the same applies to the woodlands surrounding those. This results in an exploration loop that once established persists throughout the game, whereas in Souls the only loop that exists is one of learning every step of the way (and of course the loop of dying and trying again).

There should be little surprise at this point that nonlinearity and withholding on expository dumps of information foster cooperation in affinity spaces. Examples of this can be seen throughout the Web 2.0 era and most certainly go way further back. Just consider the online communities that emerged around popular TV shows like "Lost" (DeVille, 2014), or for ex. the more recent "Game of Thrones" phenomenon (Romano, 2017). To the extent that the writers of these shows maneuvered their characters and plot points so that multiple explanations for given events remained valid, and new paths for plot & character development kept presenting themselves, the audience's creativity reached and remained at peak levels. Discussions and fan theories run amok to the extent that the writer's room of another more recent TV example that is "Westworld" chose to adopt something of a reactive approach to writing by constantly being aware of the content of relevant affinity spaces, so that the "hive mind" would not be able to guess the events of their series before they actually arrive – an approach, which also apparently had certain arguably detrimental effects on that show's narrative (Jahjaga, 2018). While video games are substantially different from their televised siblings, the core principle that make people participate in a creative manner remain the same for the most part as they tap in the same inherent psychological traits of Homo Sapiens that has us so involved with made up stories and worlds.

Nevertheless, games are played rather than watched, and this ludic element tends to throw a stick in the wheels of any study that attempts to read games purely as a text. Balancing the ludic and textual elements has become an issue in recent specialized literature resulting in the concepts of ludonarrative dissonance (Hocking, 2007) and ludonarrative resonance (Watssman, 2012), created in an attempt to explain the factors that in these authors' views contribute to, or take away from, the interactive experience certain titles provide. Dark Souls' solution to finding that balance is to make it irrelevant altogether, a la Alexander the Great cutting the proverbial Gordian knot. As discussed in 5.1 the narrative is there, but is invisible to those who do not look for it as it is fully integrated with the game world. And since the game world opts for nonlinear progression, so does the narrative. But

while in "Westworld"'s case for example the nonlinear approach to storytelling ends up deliberately frustrating the viewers who want to understand the story the most, in Dark Souls it gives that very part of the audience the rains and allows them to write the narrative themselves. Indeed there are YouTubers like the aforementioned Vaatividiya who have acquired 1.4 million subscribers and is steadily approaching quarter billion views (as of May, 2019) by writing just that narrative, over the course of many, many hours of video content, first for the original Dark Souls, and consecutively for all other FromSoftware titles that share these design choices.

But once we get to the medium of "Let's Play" videos, things get somewhat muddled again. The audience does not actually play the game, even though some have played it prior to watching, while others do alongside the streamer's playthrough. Yet in the absence of a predetermined path and any expository content, the streamer automatically takes over as the story's narrator – they are the writer's room from the TV examples above, even though they get to work with pre-established set of blocks to put together, rather than writing up the narrative in complete freedom. In that sense their practices resemble "narrative remixing as design" as put forward by Sean Duncan (2008) and thus the practices audiences themselves engage in, in other types of affinity spaces. So how do those practices get enacted within the context of producing gameplay videos of Dark Souls?

Let's imagine the perfect in terms of execution player *and* narrator. They will conquer every challenge without struggle, they will know every secret and mechanic, and they will deliver the story beats with the aplomb of an experienced audio book voiceover specialist at all the right times. But in doing so they will eliminate all that the game's nonlinearity and game-world-narrative integration have achieved – there will be nothing for the audience to contribute to, nothing for them to imagine, no possibilities to explore creatively. Therefore from the perspective of a game designer achieving ludonarrative resonance might be key in producing the intended experience for the one player who goes through their game, but the LP streamer whose intent is for their followers to be meaningfully invested in their content production needs to find another kind of balance – a balance that the building tasks of Discourse analysis can shed some light on.

8.4.2 The balancing act

If we take the entirety of a given playthrough as one humongous conversation between the streamer/player and the game, on the grounds I discussed in the beginning of the previous chapter, the resulting "Let's Play" series is produced through the creation of one massive situation network,

continuously built upon and expanded for the duration of said playthrough. Within that process the language-in-use on the player's side works through a certain pattern of building tasks that may, or may not be better suited to inviting more participation within their affinity space on behalf of their audience. Next to that pattern, which provides the structure for the conversation, what matters most is the content that is being structured. The world building calls the viewers' attention to what is important in a situation; the activity building informs the audience what is being done with and/or about it; connection building navigates through other relevant interactions that have already taken place, or may take place later on, and also relevant elements that lie outside the game world; and finally the identity and relationship building develops the identity of the streamer in relation to their audience and the identities of the player and their character in relation to the game world and the events that take place within it. Also depending on the streamer, variations in semiotic building like additional semiotic systems can become relevant for the conversation, as for ex. are the introduction of a web camera by KineticGTR, a tool which provides access to the streamer's facial expressions – a separate sign system, or the frequent laughter of Masterkizz.

Clearly we cannot analyze the performance of the streamer and/or player in isolation from the behaviour of their audience as exhibited in the user comments, something which was made very apparent over the course of the previous chapter. For example, something that all the featured in this project Dark Souls streamers do is read through the item descriptions. This is not something that has a purpose in itself solely in terms of gameplay – it is something that their viewers have advised, or even demanded them to do. Item descriptions tend to contain the core expository content of the Souls games, which when combined with their locations gives the player a clue as to what a given part of the story is. But – as Christopher Odd has commented on several occasions – paying proper attention to that aspect is next to impossible for the player alone, if they want to keep the gameplay momentum going. One would need to keep detailed notes on all finds, and sometimes new items are found very frequently, so most of that work is implicitly offloaded to the viewers. Indeed while the streamer rarely has an idea of what is it that is happening in the game narratively – both Odd and Kay have explicitly commented on that topic – the affinity space as a whole does, sometimes very well. Naturally, putting it all together from the relevant comments under the episodes and the scenes that occur during gameplay is not an easy task, but the important thing is that it is there (at least in affinity spaces that do promote knowledge exchange like Odd's, Kay's, or KineticGTR's), and that the acts of reading these descriptions are directly influenced by the viewers – an excellent example of how the external grammar modifies the internal grammar of an affinity space of the YouTube channel type. Now with all that in mind let us return to comparing the performances of the two streamers in their minute to minute narrated gameplay.

In order to do so we have to consider the nature of the data on our disposal. Until this approach has been elaborated upon and applied to other playthroughs, we are left with a pattern of comparative correlative clauses treating a set of variables as disclosed by the witnessed gameplay events and the application of Discourse analysis onto the narration produced by the streamers for the duration of the segments. It is then impossible to say at this point, changes to which variable and changes to what extent will have truly significant effects onto the knowledge exchange taking place in the affinity space. We can only operate under the presumption that the closer these are to Odd's, the closer the profile that has them is to optimal knowledge exchange levels, his being the only playthrough that generated above 50% knowledge CFTS. Of course not all relevant elements are quantifiable variables and while most such points have already been discussed throughout 7.2 & 7.3, here will be a very good place to explore those findings in more detail. For that purpose I will occasionally refer to data from both segments of all four streamers as are provided in Appendix III, as even though I have not performed an in-depth Discourse analysis on any of the player <-> game conversations contained therein, the data can still be used to support or revoke a given point.

First and foremost in its importance I think should be the focus of the streamers in terms of the experience they want to deliver their audiences through their narration. As we see in 7.2 Odd contributes to the level of immersion of his viewers by discussing his psychological state in relation to the events in the game. KineticGTR, whose playthrough happens to be in second place in terms of knowledge CFTs, also does that in his second segment. He even uses the word "psychologically": "the more souls I carry around, the more it becomes a burden for me, psychologically. It really does. Cause I become so… like… nervous about doing anything then…" "Let's Play" videos clearly resemble movies in certain ways, but unlike that medium, video game characters do not posses states of mind that can be communicated through their facial expressions, or editing techniques such as close ups or musical cues. And while the player's emotions do come through in a significant way by means of their reactions, exclamations, etc. there is an undeniable value in providing an additional layer of awareness for the viewer by explicitly bringing an aspect of said states up, much like a writer may describe their character in a novel. Utilizing webcam footage of one's facial expressions in real-time may seem like an easy way to address that issue, but the combination of the two also has a negative effect on immersion as the viewer can only focus their attention on one window at any given time. Technological artefacts such as a green screen[29] behind the player can be implemented in order to better integrate the two streams, but their utility can only go so far.

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[29] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chroma_key

Meanwhile the only such discussions Masterkizz engages in (at least in these two segments) are related to his gaming performance, as in "I'm getting a bit more comfortable with the parries on the serpent men". Even when he talks about his clearly frustrating experiences of dying repeatedly in Sen's Fortress in the second segment ("I was getting crushed by boulders, I was falling off ledges"), he does it in such a manner that it is made to look like this is just for fun. Of course this should not come as a surprise really, considering that the synopsis of his Dark Souls LP ends with "Watch me get stabbed / crushed / bashed / electrocuted, but I still come out laughing". This is quite the literal statement that entertainment will be the sole priority of this playthrough. By comparison in the first episodes of his streams, Odd asks his viewers to "set the vibe" by turning off lights, removing any distractions, and using headphones if possible. Therefore as a first point in me putting together the Let's Play Performance Profile, I will argue that the more an LP channel is focused on the viewer's immersion – that is the player's performance is *coherent* with the design of the game-generator – the more knowledge exchange is facilitated in the affinity space of that channel. Unsurprisingly this reflects the influences specific to the audience's evaluation discourse found in these same channels.

In terms of language-in-use during the playthroughs this hypothesis can also be verified in another way by evaluating the connection building done by the streamers. More specifically as per Gee (1999, p. 94) we can ask "What sorts of connections are made [...], to other people, ideas, texts, things, institutions, and Discourses outside the current situation?" Throughout the segment explored in 7.2, Odd builds no connections whatsoever to elements outside the game world. By comparison Masterkizz builds such connections twice, first by referring to the "Prince of Persia" title in his scene A, and next when he sings the pop song in Scene E. These connections represent clear interruptions to the viewer's immersion even when we take into account that the precise definition of this term is somewhat fluid. Thus it is a viable marker, which converges with the evaluation made above and in doing so contributes to the overall validity of the analysis.

There is a further side to Odd's and KineticGTR's approach in these situations that I already touched upon in 7.2, this time by means of their identity building. Both men discuss their projected psychological states in terms such as "physically uncomfortable", "a burden", "nervous", etc. All of these reveal vulnerability under the surface and constitute exposing oneself to those around, which in turn makes it easier for the viewers to empathise with the player. And creating an authentic empathic connection with a character is the shortest path to achieving immersion irrelevant of the medium (Miall, 2009). Kay for her part does not portray herself as vulnerable along the same lines that her male colleagues do. One may argue that women need not do so, or at least not to the same extent, courtesy of the gender bias inherent in our culture (Hollander, 2001). Nevertheless, we find a

similar note in her identity building when she refers to herself as a "dork" at the beginning of her first segment, which per its accepted definition in this context means "a contemptible, socially inept person" (Oxford Dictionary). Anyone who one may feel contempt for is by extension perceived as more vulnerable than they are, and any form of ineptitude would provoke a reaction of assistance and helpfulness in those receptive to such cues and open to cooperation rather than competition (Stangor et al., 2014), which brings me to my next point.

Another key element that comes through the identity building as performed by some of the streamers appears to be bringing one's audience into the playthrough by acknowledging their roles on one's actions, be it explicitly or implicitly. In the two segments I transcribed and evaluated for each streamer Masterkizz is the only one who never did refer to his audience in those terms. Odd and Kay did so in relation to the secret/illusory walls, while what KineticGTR meant when discussing his viewer's input never made it through since both times he began to talk about it (lines 3 & 5 in the first segment) he got interrupted (or rather his attention was drawn elsewhere). In doing so these streamers both invite the help of their audience by adopting the identities of people who, while not necessarily *need* said help, will nevertheless appreciate it, and acknowledge whenever such input is received, thus giving credit to those took to the comments to provide it, all in a very subtle manner. Hence the topic of receiving and giving the *right* kind of help as well as when and how to do it, positions itself as very central to YouTube LP channels Discourse, and as such central to this thesis, because it relates to emergent socio-cultural rules of conduct that directly govern the knowledge exchanges in these affinity spaces (see also the discussion on "backseating" in the previous chapter).

Last, but not least, since these are video game playthroughs we are putting under the microscope after all, we need to evaluate the effectiveness of the gameplay approaches as portrayed by Christopher Odd and Masterkizz. Note that said effectiveness should not be equated with gaming literacy, or gaming skills. We are not interested in how well they conduct combat, or their reflexes, or aim, etc. Rather we want to examine said approaches within the context of narrated gameplay functioning as a conversation between the player and the game. And more specifically, how well they understand what it is that the game is "saying" and how they proceed to act upon it. Or if we are to formulate this in the terms of ecological psychology, how well they recognize the affordances based on game mechanics and how fitting are the effective abilities they attempt to pair those with. And while some data on such matters can be inferred by different means, for example in the way I interpreted Masterkizz' character equipment earlier on, here I will focus only on the content of their segments as extracted from the playthroughs.

Indeed at some level said effectiveness can be entirely distilled to how much attention does the player delegate to the game's interface, the game world, and the events taking place within it, as these comprise the total sum of real time information they have available at their disposal at any given moment. I already explained in 7.2 why narrating while playing puts a significant additional demand on the attention resources that one has available during play. In Dark Souls this is most easily witnessed during more difficult boss fights, featuring multiple attempts, wherein the players become progressively more silent the more focused they need to be in order to overcome their adversary. Of course this is not surprising as it has been well established that conversation has a fixed interference cost on attention even regardless of the other task's difficulty (Kunar et al., 2018). Situations like these usually tend to prompt an apology on behalf of the streamer and an explanation as to why it is that they are quiet.

But scene by scene I do not seem to find much of a difference between Odd and Masterkizz in terms of effectiveness. Instead what is there is remarkably similar. Both players ended up in the pit because of a failure in spatial judgement – Odd miscalculated the distance between the swinging blades, while Masterkizz the width of the bridge when he tried to go around the lizardman guarding it. Both successfully exploited the limitations of their opponents in movement or effective range by remaining out of reach and resorting to ranged combat. Both displayed the occasional clue that they do not pay attention to the game's interface that carefully – Odd missed receiving the souls of the caster who fell from the bridge, while Masterkizz tried to drink an empty estus flask. Both preferred to avoid battle the moment they found they have the means to escape the encounters – Odd knew about the exit from the pit already upon falling, while Masterkizz found it by exploring each path that could potentially lead him out of there. Both ended up winning the fights they *did* choose to engage in – Odd killed the swordsman from the bridge and the caster, while Masterkizz prevailed over the former enemy and the titanite demon in his way. And finally both explicitly looked for hidden passages in the area though judging by different features found in the environment – Odd focused on the side room, where he could see an item on a balcony, while Masterkizz (most likely) noticed the archway-like shape of the wall texture on the balcony the ladder took him to.

So should we take this to mean that how effective of a player one is in a given video game has no correlation with the learning potential of the affinity space as generated by the playthrough of said game? Well, no, at least not in the absolute sense this answer implies. Clearly if a player is unable to conduct themselves properly in a given game to the extent that the experience becomes frustrating for their viewers, they will surely just abandon the streamer's channel. But who would maintain such a playthrough in the first place? Most streamers have, like all gamers, preferences of

which titles they want to play, and tend to develop their skills in playing these titles alongside said preferences (Vahlo et al., 2017). So while such "Let's Play" series are theoretically possible they are also unlikely to exist, because what is frustrating for the viewers to the point of being unacceptable is likely to be just as unacceptable for the player, so such LPs will hardly ever be realized, especially on YouTube where the streamer has a chance to judge the final product before uploading it. Rather we could say that there seems to be a very wide diapason between the situation outlined above and the "perfect player" thought experiment from a few pages back, where the streamer's effectiveness in playing the game-generator does not have a significant effect on the learning potential of the affinity space of an YouTube channel[30]. A more specific and valid statement on this particular aspect of the playthroughs will require research in its own right.

8.4.3 Drawing the line

So in summary, once we sift through all the reflections produced in the course of conducting this analysis what are the themes that have emerged from within the data, which one can take as characteristic of playthroughs facilitating the generation of affinity spaces with increased learning potential? What are the outlines of the proposed "Let's Play Performance Profile" of the streamer, whose approach appears to be the most effective in building such spaces? There are five main outcomes:

- Focus on immersion in all aspects of the execution – utilized semiotic systems; flow of narration & gameplay, which avoids "commentary lag" and interruptions of any nature; switching frames only to direct audience attention; little to no intertextuality;
- Emphasis on, or at least a regular discussion of, the player's psychological state during gameplay
- Portrayal of a "vulnerable" identity, one open to receiving assistance from others
- Taking into consideration and acknowledging the feedback of the audience

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[30] There is also the matter of improvement. In Kay's playthrough for example she has a lot more issues with Dark Souls early on (anecdotally she has never even used the kind of controller this title requires to be played with, prior to starting the LP), which is reflected in the numbering of her episodes – the other three streamers arrive at Sen's Fortress somewhere in the range of the 25th-30th part of their respective playthroughs, whereas Kay reaches that point only at episode 49 (with most of her episodes longer than the average value). However, with her skills and understanding of the gameplay visibly gaining traction over time, the "Let's Play" appears to have resulted in a very functional affinity space.

- Player's effectiveness during gameplay appears to have no significant effect, or rather the evidence is inconclusive, since the players perform very similar in that respect

With respect to my third research question, as this also applies strictly to the streamer's actions within the affinity space, one should also factor in the tendency of users to share their personal experiences more often when the content creator participates actively within the comment sections of their LP episodes. Therefore, we can say that together with the first four points as listed above, these particular features count among the factors that contribute to the enabling of potential learning outcomes in the performative behaviour of the player creating the "Let's Play" series.

I say "among", since the outlines of the profile as drawn by those five properties are rougher than I had hoped and one cannot conclusively state on basis of the analysis in this chapter alone that these are indeed *the* deciding factors determining the extent to which knowledge transactions will occur in a given affinity space of the YouTube channel type. Undoubtedly increasing the volume of data processed will allow for even more themes to emerge and ultimately converge onto more of a completed puzzle. However as it is, one has to wade through a lot of content that – while indeed enlightening on many of the intricacies that characterize the process of producing the narrated gameplay at the core of these novel affinity spaces – has limited utility in uncovering the answers this research seeks.

CHAPTER NINE: KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE AS A FUNCTION OF AESTHETIC CHOICE – A DISCUSSION

In accordance with its title, the penultimate chapter will aim to discuss the processes of knowledge exchange in YouTube channels via the lenses of aesthetic theory and more precisely its application to the field of video games. My hope si that this analysis should further augment the reader's understanding of gameplay as such and some of the implications of its use as streaming media when different kinds of audiences are considered.

Now among the questions one can ask on any given topic there is one that often does not sit well with data-based inquiries, especially in the realms of social science – that of "Why?" aka every child's (and perhaps every philosopher's) favourite word. And while I may have omitted it from my research questions as such, it is nevertheless worth bringing it up in order to ponder the rationale of those involved – streamer and audience alike – as in why are they doing all of this in the first place? Indeed it is likely that this will be the first question raised by anyone who is unfamiliar with the

practice. "Why would you watch someone else play a game rather than playing it yourself?" or some variation thereof has likely echoed in the ears of many a stream viewer. Of course the easiest method to compile a satisfying answer to this inquiry would be to direct it at an appropriately large number of people and look for the inevitable patterns in their replies, which would surely encompass a broad range of personal reasons and interests. But this would clearly require accumulating yet another set of qualitative data and go beyond the scope of this text.

Nevertheless I cannot help but be curious about the users' motivations. Said curiosity was initially piqued by some of the explanations that followed from affinity space and related theories (see chapter 3.1.1), which to me remained unconvincing as they prescribed a characteristic to the members of communities of practice and affinity spaces defined by explicit pursuit of status and knowledge. Yet in my observations based on the collected data that was only seldom true – only but a small fraction of the knowledge transactions revolved around explicit questions and answers (see 6.3), while the Youtube channel as such did not provide the infrastructure necessary to assign status and/or progression to the users of the affinity space. The impression I developed over the course of the study was that the audiences were constantly trying to "pressure" the streamer to perform in certain ways, but these felt abstract and unspoken. It was as if the comments were providing only surface cues and semi-conscious approximates of what was really that one wanted to see happening on their screen.

This apparent lack of objective clarity made me realize that much like with the consumption of a product or the use of an everyday object there must surely be an aesthetic aspect to the user's preferences, which will to a certain extent influence the channel they decide to engage with and furthermore inform the choices behind their activity within the affinity space. Because unlike other virtual spaces that involve informal learning LP channels revolve around the ongoing consumption of media content any knowledge transactions in said space will at least in some respect be determined by an aesthetic choice (Melchionne, 2017). What is unique in this case is that the much debated issue of the fandom influencing the artists they are fans of in contemporary participatory culture (Jenkins, 2009) has materialized in perhaps the most literal way possible, even though there are now precedents related to the film industry that come very close (Robertson, 2020). That however is not important in the context of this research. What is important is that aesthetic theory may allow me to paint the previously discussed results in a different light and I had already encountered a scholar whose angle on the topic had struck me as particularly inventive.

I hereby speak of Graeme Kirkpatrick – a British sociologist who has produced a lot of works over the years dealing with the application of said theory to video games, which as per usual provide

a novel subject unsuitable to more traditional interpretations in many academic fields. Kirkpatrick claims gameplay makes video games inherently different a cultural practice, and that the *feel* for the embodied action of said gameplay is what makes it best understood in aesthetic terms (Kirkpatrick, 2011). Similar to dance, the repeated performance of sequences of actions during gameplay allows for their eventual commitment to one's implicit memory (this is something colloquially known as "muscle memory", which however is not the same as what that same term means in biology) where they need not any conscious effort to be evoked (Meister & Buffalo, 2017). Kirkpatrick quotes ballet dancers who describe their process as transforming an observed movement into a mental map of physical sensations that guides the deconstruction and (assembly of a given routine for subsequent performances and argues that gameplay is identical in that respect (Kirkpatrick, 2011). Therefore it is where the purely (audio)visual aspects of the video game intersect with the dynamics of gameplay in terms of physical sensations, that the aesthetic image of that game can be found.

Obviously when it comes to the audience of LP videos there are no physical sensations to speak of as the act of gameplay is reduced to its visual component – the outcome that results on the screen. But is that really the case? We saw that there is fundamental difference between the input of those users of the affinity space that have prior experience with the game-generator and those who do not. Even in the set of playthroughs, which resulted in the lowest frequencies of knowledge transactions overall – RE7's – the affinity space that featured the most instances of users playing the game based on their comments (in this case alongside the streamer rather than prior to them, which is more likely with new releases) scored the highest (see 6.3.3). Could it be that these differences are to some extent determined by not only the availability of explicit knowledge to be shared, but the embodied memories of the act of gameplay itself?

Let's take the basic yet crucial action of "circle-strafing" in Dark Souls. When locked onto an enemy, moving left or right makes the player character circle the target. The target will in most cases begin turning on its vertical axis as to keep facing the player, so that they cannot reach a backstab position (see 8.1.1). Each enemy has a certain speed of rotation in such situations, which makes some easier to backstab than others, but mostly it is their "willingness" to perform an attack (and the nature of said attack), which decides how likely the act of circle-strafing is to achieve the sought after backstab, since during the attack animation the enemy will no longer be able to rotate. The performance of moves like circle-strafing is precisely the kind of embodied action that Kirkpatrick is talking about. It is only through the physical sensations experienced during actual gameplay – the very twists of the analogue sticks of the pad – that one is able to understand why, when, and how this action works and needs to (or not) be executed.

This in turn changes completely one's interpretation of seeing it portrayed on a screen. In terms of its strictly visual aesthetic the act looks inherently silly as it fails to capture the fantastical, yet realistic implications of the art style – imagine a heavily-armed knight hovering in a perfect circle around some scary-looking creature that is slowly outpaced in its turning step only to be brutally penetrated by a sword or smashed into the ground by a mace a second later. It is *strange* and most definitely not the first thing to come to mind when one imagines a battle between such characters. Because of this a former Dark Souls player will be well aware that no newcomer will ever attempt this strategy in their first hours with the game – circle-strafing is something all players seem to figure out by themselves over time, but it does take time to get there. However they will also expect basically all players to be doing this in certain situations later in the game. To the experienced crowd seeing either of these things happen otherwise will signal that the game is in a sense played wrong – the footage will *feel* wrong. By contrast all this will not matter one bit to those who have no personal experience with the game. If anything the footage will probably feel more impressive when battles do not necessarily feature opponents performing such "gamey" actions. Conversely when they do see these performed, their explanations of why the actions work the way they do will remain hollow – they will simply have to accept it as a fact of life, or of game, so to speak. As such the feel for the game translates directly into a form of tacit knowledge (see 3.2) well fitting any affinity space, albeit utilized in a manner somewhat different from what Gee (2004) defined.

So what is it that makes the gameplay proposal attractive to those with no prior experience with a given title? Why were the viewers of Masterkizz so entertained by the streamer's shenanigans in Dark Souls? Surely enough an explanation can be intuited from this very same line of theoretical thought, and it just so happens to be something that Dark Souls tends to provide in spades to players and viewers alike – failure.

Once again, in close resemblance to dancers, video game players aim to achieve something that can be termed "flow" – a mastery of various sequences of actions, which combine together in an uninterrupted fashion[31]. Unlike dancers however players are much more accepting of failure in their routines, since the variety of factors influencing the execution is much greater and since even if a given sequence is completely mastered it will eventually have to flow into another sequence never before practiced, thus opening more room for error and so ad infinitum, or at least until the session ends. Therefore, failure during gameplay allows for the more comical aspects of these unexpected interruptions to flow to come to the fore – one always expects the player to fail and the more confident said player's execution the funnier their failure becomes. This reaction has corrective and

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[31] All this naturally refers only to titles falling within the larger genre of action games, where there is an avatar for the player to control in the first place.

disciplinary sides to it – what is funny also hurts the performer and thus pushes them to do better. According to Kirkpatrick the way failure is managed is essential to the aesthetics of gameplay: the overall experience is by implication a structuring of sensation that incorporates failure-junctures by design (Kirkpatrick, 2011).

The above explains to a large extent why the audiences of former players and newcomers to the game-generator behave differently in the affinity space. One can always rely on a streamer who emphasizes any humor inherent to the proceedings and a game that all but warrants failure at every other step to produce entertaining content, which like all humor can be universally appreciated once the viewer has at least basic awareness of what they are seeing. Such viewers can just sit back and watch the events unfold, whereas with LP series that attract mostly former players there is a clear tendency for them to try and wrestle control away from the streamer. Indeed they may attempt to subdue this impulse in accordance with how "backseating" is perceived within the given YouTube channel, but it will ultimately be a factor behind the production of more knowledge transactions in that affinity space. One can thus say that a large part of the motivation behind knowledge sharing processes in such affinity spaces lies to some extent within the inherently comparative nature of the experience of viewing other people play something that you have played yourself. Kirkpatrick writes after Jacques Ranciere (2007) that "[…] when I encounter an art object I don't know what anyone else makes of it, I only know that everyone else also asks that question. With games, on the other hand, I don't tend to ask myself, 'what do others make of it?' but rather, 'are they better at it than me?'" (Kirkpatrick, 2011).

To this I would add that "being better" does not refer to something that can be necessarily measured with a "high score". Rather it has to do with the inexhaustible variety of "flows" that can be achieved by those in the player's seat. Every path taken can be better in some aspect or another than a different such path – the qualities of any gameplay performance cannot be reduced to an abstract summation of its constituents, despite Kirkpatrick's observation that video games are very much an abstract medium and not a representational one. What he means here has to do with the tendency of video games to be far better played when understood in terms of affordance networks, as previously discussed, rather than the representations the graphical contents stand for on their own. Even though video games are often populated by the exact same things one would find in, for example, a film's narrative, their functionality and thus process of meaning-making is fundamentally different (Kirkpatrick, 2011). Remember the reactions of the players when they first walked into that scene in the Sen's Fortress segment (see 8.2 & 8.3)? None of it had to do with the meaning of the scene communicated by what it represented in visual terms. Instead it was all about the realization

that the player will need to perform platforming-style action sequences in the context of Dark Souls and the implied steep climb of the difficulty curve. While all players learn to expect Kirkpatrick's "failure-junctures" none are likely to look forward to experiencing one too many of those.

The sheer density of potential that each situation in a game like Dark Souls brims with allows for a multitude of unique experiences and LP channels provide the platform for any such experiences to compare with any others through the footage at their core. Video games may not be like other art forms in terms of their meaning making processes, but they are very similar when being discussed by those who experience them. French filmmaker Olivier Assayas once said something along the lines of resolution being the single most boring thing that can be put on film. Indeed withholding resolution is one of the tricks that can increase the interpretative density of a narrative art piece, but games need not such tricks up their sleeves as they are inherently open to debate along the very same lines that open them to play. However in the context of the LP channel each unique prior user experience with the game-generator represents a path not taken that continuously contests what is happening in the playthrough. This provokes a variety of interactions on the viewer's behalf in order to guide the streamer by providing personal knowledge or anecdotal evidence, raising specific questions, etc. Such behaviour can be seen as constituting a paradox insofar it is unlikely that any viewer's ultimate goal is to watch dozens of hours of playthroughs *exactly* the same as their own, yet many appear to be either unable or unwilling to let their personal flow be "forgotten", and consciously or not end up exercising pressure leading in precisely this direction.

I guess this should not come as a surprise when seen within the larger context of social networking, since sharing the personal and even private experiences with one's closer social circles or the world at large is the de facto behavioural norm to adhere to, but nevertheless this is one of those scenarios where the dynamic seems rather counterintuitive. One explanation that might apply at least to those viewers proceeding with their own playthroughs in parallel to the streamer they are watching is a sense of camaraderie that renders their knowledge exchange as help needed in order to achieve a common goal – players banding together versus the challenge of the game. Another viable explanation would be that some users – unable to perform as streamers themselves for any reason, or having failed to attract the audience they sought – are utilizing the LP channel as a proxy to fulfill their personal needs for self-expression and showcase their own abilities and knowledge in a manner closely resembling how some fans seek to bask in the reflected fame of their idols (Duffett, 2014), but pursuing this line of thought leads to yet another shift in the academic literature needed to see it to completion. At any rate the unique aspects of the LP videos, which require taking into

account both the aesthetic choices of the audience members as players and as media consumers, further compound the complexity of the topic for those considering it as a subject of research.

CHAPTER TEN: IN CONCLUSION – LOOKING BACK AND LOOKING FORWARD

And so it is that we have arrived at the end of our journey – an exploratory tour of YouTube LP channels, during which various paths were followed, some straight as an arrow, others decidedly more meandering – in order to find answers to the questions raised in the beginning, although as is often the case with the research process, another set of questions may have emerged in their stead. I will use this final piece of the text to revisit some of the more notable places we found ourselves at while travelling along said paths, evaluate the results from a different perspective, and finally take a look at what may lay beyond this currently final destination.

It has been several years since this research project was originally conceived of and initiated, and while a lot has changed in the world of online media communications and video game streaming in particular, much has remained the same. What has not changed is that video games still command the highest viewer engagement (The Nielsen Company, 2019). What has changed are the viewership numbers – which keep increasing – and the mode of said engagement, as viewers are now more frequently involved with live streams (Iqbal, 2018), while the asynchronous practices observed here have taken more of a support role for many gaming content creators. This development is helped along by the higher quality of internet infrastructure available worldwide, which allows much higher average upload speeds, and changes in the monetization and copyright practices of the two biggest platforms – Twitch.tv and YouTube (Alexander, 2018), which motivates many to oscillate between the two IT giants (YouTube also offers a live streaming service for several years now) and the newly joined dedicated game streaming services by Microsoft via their (no longer operational) Mixer brand and Facebook Gaming (Potoroaca, 2020). Meanwhile the ever-growing popularity of e-sports further contributes to the lion's share of live streaming.

Be that as it may the core reasoning that supplied relevance to this dissertation remains the same – in the current context it is very likely that children, young adults, and – increasingly – middle-aged people count among the audience of this type of content and as such it is important to explore the dynamics that underpin its creation and dissemination. Among said dynamics the one I felt was of particular interest was a kind of literacy distribution by means of knowledge sharing and exchange within YouTube channels dedicated to video game playthroughs. While gaming literacy may not be

yet included in the more prominent lists of new literacies (Jenkins, 2009, it is nevertheless proven to be congruent with systems, ludic, and design thinking (Zimmerman, 2009), all of which are vital for developing a mindset wired to face the challenges inherent to our contemporary information society (Schmidt & Coudray, 2004).

The very first step on the way was to situate the aforementioned channels as an object of research grounded in scientific literature, which I did by utilizing Gee's theory of social-semiotic and affinity spaces (Gee, 2005). I found that when interpreted as affinity spaces YouTube LP channels fit with all twelve key features required, albeit with a couple of caveats. The first of these concerned the channels functioning as more of a cluster of overlapping affinity spaces rather than one singular environment with sharply drawn boundaries, due to the channels housing multiple playthroughs and thus game-generators. Next and directly related to this was the extension of these game-generators internal grammars to the playthroughs themselves as the video medium served as the de facto core of knowledge exchange, while remaining completely dependant to the video game software for its existence.

Since these were practices of informal learning being explored, a natural fit for the purpose was the approach of ecological theory of knowing, which interpreted all learning as a function of the context it is taking place in. The adoption of said approach allowed me to direct my research inquiry in a way that painted a complete picture – at least on a certain level. More specifically, I developed three research questions each of which contributed an angle of observation necessary for examining this learning in context in its entirety:

1. Can there be observed a significant difference among different affinity spaces that have emerged around playthroughs of the same game, in terms of the knowledge shared therein? What about among the same affinity spaces, but with different generators?

2. What types of discourse are utilized in these affinity spaces and along what lines do they influence the content produced in the LP channels?

3. What are the factors that contribute to enabling potential learning outcomes in the design of the video game that is used for an LP and the performative behaviour of the player who is making it?

The first and foremost task laid in front of this project thus was to establish whether there was in fact a learning process taking place via knowledge sharing, and if that was the case whether the quality of said process was notably different among the several affinity spaces included in the research. In order to do that I took to the comment sections of the LPs of several video game titles

as made by a number of streamers, to dissect and categorize the content and function of the input. While the answers to both these questions were decidedly in the affirmative, there were several caveats to take into account. In particular it became apparent that certain design decisions can influence the manner in which the game in question will generate its corresponding affinity space and in doing so shift the audience focus from the gaming literacy aspects of gameplay to the emotional reactions evoked by gameplay events. Shorthand for doing that appears to be positioning the title within the horror genre (comedy and romance would also seem like potential candidates, but their presence across the dominant parts of the contemporary gaming landscape is decidedly less prevalent) and designing it around its conventions (see 5.2). Horror movies and video games may often serve as an example of artistic approach dedicated to extracting a specific emotional response at the expense of anything else, mostly because fear tends to overwhelm all other emotions, even though people react differently to being scared from such material (Hudson et al., 2020). In turn the streamer being well attuned to the gameplay of such a title would not increase the amount of knowledge transactions in the related affinity space, but rather drive up the amount of emotional comments even further.

However much like their film counterparts not every horror game relies on cheap thrills and scares to engage the audience, so any such stereotyping should be avoided. Curiously enough there is actually a precedent in gaming whereby a very thoughtful such title named "Soma" (dealing with the profound implications of having one's consciousness copied) had a game mode added some two years after its release, which changed the way the "monsters" in the game worked so that the player could explore and solve the game's challenges in peace (Orland, 2017). Notably this development followed after player-made mods doing a similar thing were already put in place by the community, which is to say it was conceived in an affinity space not unlike the ones discussed here and a rather exemplary case of the external grammar of the game-generator modifying the internal one. It also provides a very exemplary way to test the hypothesis from the previous paragraph with LPs of the two versions of "Soma" and verify whether the ratio of knowledge transactions to affect comments will shift as expected. But that of course is a matter of a different text, whereas at this point I can turn my attention to the two other key elements which governed the quality of the learning process by means of their ongoing interactions – the content creator and their audience.

Whereas the first research question dealt with the "What (is taking place)?" within the comment sections of the LP YouTube channel, the second focused on the "How (does it happen)?" By identifying the types of discourse utilized by the users of the affinity spaces I could understand how the audience's input influences the very content that evokes said input in the first place.

Alongside a number of important discoveries like thematic hotspots and the "backseating" dilemma it was here that the main loop around which the learning ecology of this type of affinity space is formed makes itself apparent. Aspects of it can be found within Gee's own concept of reciprocal grammar modification (Gee, 2005), which states that the semiotic resources of the affinity space are continuously altered by the generator of said space, while in turn its own grammar – the structure which governs what knowledge will be evoked and how will it be made meaningful in the context of the affinity space – is modified by the accumulation of those semiotic resources.

"Backseating" on the other hand is described by a much less straightforward dynamic and analyzing it in any meaningful detail will also involve its own dedicated research effort. In general it seems that the more narrative-driven the game-generator is, the more likely is any knowledge shared within its affinity space to be regarded as "spoiler" by the streamer and other users and thus unwanted much like its counterpart in film/television fan communities (Brojakowski, 2015). Unlike those however it is the reduced enjoyment for the player that translates into reduced enjoyment for the viewers even if they themselves already know the content of said "spoiler". This increases the moderation capacity of the affinity space substantially when compared to the aforementioned fan communities, because many of those able to act upon the problematic comments are not afraid of having that same content spoiled for them. Consecutively the "umbrella" cast to shield the affinity space from perceived "spoilers" in such video games may often overreach and cover knowledge transactions that do not technically refer to the plot of the game-generator, as per the definition of the term (Brojakowski, 2015). Meanwhile, the more a video game is defined by its play mechanics and the depth of its systems rather than its narrative, the more welcome any useful information seems to be, but that is most definitely not a one to one relationship. From the viewer's perspective the majority of this "backseating" discourse comes back to the paradox described in the previous chapter where one cannot possibly be meaningfully engaged with LP content, which is identical to their personal experience with the game, yet their very engagement often serves to facilitate just such an outcome.

Speaking of engagement with content, "thematic hotspots" are a different thing altogether and can be handily controlled by the streamer if they understand these and if they so wish. And their interest in doing so in the context of running a YouTube channel has to do with the platform's recommendation and discovery algorithm, which treats the amount of comments per video as one of the three key markers of user engagement and ranks the video higher in searches for similar items and/or includes it in the list of recommended videos once a similar item has been viewed (Bucher, 2018). Therefore, this is one area where the mercantile aspects of the practice tend to align with the

educational potential of the social-semiotic space that emerges around it, insofar the streamer resolves to focus on the game-generator only. The ways of instigating a discussion and increasing user participation are many and by no means are all of them constructive or socially-responsible. While it is ultimately up to the streamer to conduct this aspect of the channel as they see fit, a singular focus on increasing user engagement can easily swing the entire community towards a type of provocative content that exists solely to feed arguments amongst the users and deteriorate completely as an affinity space. Call it the social network equivalent of "falling to the dark side" if you will.

So the final major driver of knowledge exchange inherent to the organization of the YouTube LP channel and thus the subject of the third and final research question of the thesis is of course the streamer playing the game-generator and producing the playthrough content. To answer it, I tried a more experimental approach based on J. P. Gee's ideas (Gee, 2015) and utilizing another item from his theoretical toolset – Discourse analysis (Gee, 1999). The latter allows for recreating the so-called situation network, which is produced by our language-in-use by means of several building tasks. My original idea was to interpret the narrated gameplay featured in the "Let's Play" videos as an actual conversation between player and game, which would result in sequences of building tasks encoding the situation networks not unlike genetic code, which in turn would allow me to find and read into any patterns that might appear in said code. However, due to the unforeseen friction between the volumes of data produced by the methodology on one hand and the requirements of the minimum code length for having such patterns emerge at all on the other, forced me to adopt something of a "middle ground" approach to balance the two. At best said approach allowed me to uncover a set of factors in the player's performance that facilitated the emergence of affinity spaces with increased learning potential: a focus on immersion in all aspects of the LP, drawing attention to the player's psychological state, displaying certain personality characteristics, being clear on the use of audience input, and being proactive in the same comment sections where said input is received. At worst it produced text that at times read like a bad movie script.

Even after all three of my research questions were convincingly answered, and the larger picture of the learning processes taking place behind the scenes of this practice of media production and consumption was successfully completed, one cannot help but be astonished at how much more can be done with the topic. Indeed this full picture in the end is but a snapshot of a dynamic and ever-changing landscape, which in order to be truly captured needs not a single frame, but a sequence of many such panels – a stream of video if you will forgive the pun. We saw in chapter 9 that aesthetic theory complements very well the explanations posited by my implementation of

affinity space theory, but clearly there is ample opportunity to interpret the subject via different approaches altogether. Even within the same field of thought many questions remain. For example what are we to make of the cluster-like nature of this particular type of affinity spaces? How does this recurring incorporation of multiple generators affect the longevity and overall direction of the channels? What are the dynamics of reaching a consensus on "backseating" and can understanding these uncover parameters that may somehow be set for optimal levels of knowledge exchange?

Further investigations into the matter are more than warranted since video game streaming media is clearly here to stay and moreover one can expect it to evolve further, and do so soon. Such evolution will inevitably have both a technological dimension – for example via Virtual Reality (VR) and/or other routes; and a socio-economic one – it is fairly easy to imagine IT corporations moving from their current practices of rent extraction to a more direct control over the production and marketing of such content and some have already taken steps in this direction (see Gilbert, 2020). One way or another video game streaming is on its way to capture even more attention in terms of both viewing hours and social interactions, and in a reality of an attention economy predicated by the flood of free content characteristic of the information society, attention is the single most scarce resource available (Goldhaber, 1997). Furthermore, in the current (as of the year 2020) unfortunate context of globally widespread policies of social distancing due to emerging novel viral disease, the activities taking place within such virtual spaces are more relevant than ever before.

Another unfortunate development taking place in parallel to me writing this thesis was the radical politicization of much of the gaming related content on the Web (Bown, 2017) – indeed even some YouTube channels of the "Let's Play" variety like the ones discussed here. Said politicization is characterized by a distinctly right-wing and reactionary bent and can be observed not only in the popular culture that surrounds gaming practices, but also across other forms of less prosumption-oriented, but similarly popular entertainment loci like the until recently universally beloved "Star Wars" franchise (Bay, 2018). Bown is undoubtedly correct in claiming that the gaming medium has enabled a playing field out of balance and that the political left urgently needs to find ways to work "inside the dreamspace" or lose the battle before it has even begun in earnest (Bown, 2017), but I am not completely convinced to what extent the Lacanian psychoanalysis he is subscribing to can define and structure a mode of action towards such a goal. By comparison social semiotics – having now fully transcended its purely linguistic origins – seems well tailored to meet these needs and is a powerful tool, which can map the dynamics of meaning-making in a vast variety of virtual spaces and settings, and prescribe functional ways of intervention. In fact maybe this text provides just such a prescription?

It is important to note that it is difficult to gauge to what extent the development described above is due to truly political or merely financial reasons. As I have discussed earlier in this chapter especially within the current thorny political climate it may seem attractive for some to increase user engagement by refocusing their channels on (pseudo)political content, since on YouTube's terms hateful and trolling comments are still comments, and likes and dislikes are both markers that serve to make a video more popular and therefore more profitable for the channel's owner. And the temptation is likely to be high since it is harder than ever before for newcomers to be noticed and for a LP channel to gain traction (Frankel, 2018).

However, if Google were to change the user engagement profiles of YouTube streamers of gaming content in accordance with the discoveries of this work, which mean recognizing LP channels as affinity spaces and rewarding those who develop and maintain the spaces to maximize knowledge exchange, the whole system may reorganize itself in something else entirely. As we have seen the information is already being exchanged within and across the spaces, it only needs to be codified and the exchange itself gamified[32] by implementing some software or wetware solution, or perhaps a kind of hybrid approach. Much like the game-generators at their core the platforms that underpin their socialization and monetization via the production of streaming video content can be made completely self-sufficient in terms of the mechanics, which structure user-to-user and streamer-to-user interaction and thus facilitate learning processes.

A rather interesting from a theoretical perspective side effect of applying gamification in this manner would be that it will reintroduce that one affinity space feature, which I could not account for when I initially situated the YouTube channels as such. Namely, the *roads to status* find their way back into being a defining characteristic, since gamification inavariably utilizes (point-based) ranking and reward systems, and other tools designed to incentivize the activity in question by formalizing and quantifying various aspects of user participation, which will inevitably result in status being assigned to users and so enable YouTube channels to become affinity spaces in the orthodox sense. Yet another very likely consequence of taking this approach would be that it might go a long way in assisting the users of the affinity space find the parameters of "backseating" most useful for any given playthrough[33], since feedback to user input should be much more easy to provide in a gamified environment and so should be any adjustments made on the user side. Of course until this last point is confirmed experimentally in some way it shall remain solely in the realm of speculation.

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[32] As per Oxford Dictionary: the application of typical elements of game playing (e.g. point scoring, competition with others, rules of play) to other areas of activity, typically as an online marketing technique to encourage engagement with a product or service.
[33] A workaround that I have noticed being practiced in some Twitch channels involves the assignment of an "official backseater" whose judgment the streamer trusts enough to allow them to apply said parameters.

While I was writing this text there were tons of gamification additions made to all main live streaming platforms both on the streamer's and the viewer's ends. In the former's case these mostly concerned providing the content creator with some type of goal-oriented achievement ladder complete with perks to be acquired by means of progression (for ex. have 100 concurrent viewers, or stream 500 minutes within a month, etc.). And while such bonuses may often have substantial effects on the functionality and monetization capacities of the channel (for ex. Twitch.tv's partner program), the gamification applied to how the audience experiences said channel (usually through customizable features made available via the so-called chatbots, which expand the utility of the live stream chat) is of decidedly more cosmetic variety. There are of course exceptions to the latter, like the opportunities to acquire in-game items if one is playing the same game featured on the stream, but few video games are well suited to this approach and even fewer actually utilize it (Siutila, 2018).

This is of course understandable, since ultimately the gamification applied within the current paradigm of video game streaming is for purely commercial purposes and serves chiefly to facilitate the exchanges of various invented virtual currencies (for ex. "channel points" rewarded for viewing time, which one needs to obtain manually; "cheering" bits, obtained through other transactions on Amazon, and so on) eventually resulting in the occasional transaction of a real such currency to the corporate bank accounts. The audience is the resource to be exploited in any such scenario, thus any participatory arrangements made for it will seek to extract the most value with the least investment. However, platforms like YouTube, which host pre-recorded video game playthrough content paired with asynchronously delivered user input, function differently in terms of monetization, since the latter is done predominantly by ads. Subscriptions and other purchases are largely irrelevant here, because the only thing a viewer needs to do to support the streamer is turn off their ad-blocker software, if they use one. Therefore, if said platforms were to take cue from their live streaming counterparts and employed gamification to their content distribution as to structure interactions on the user's side with an affinity space context in mind, the need to extract value from the increase of the audience's engagement would not stand in the way of such an approach.

What will most certainly stand in the way of it though is the current integration of gaming content with everything else existing on the given platform, to which obviously the adoption of any affinity space-oriented gamification practices bears no relevance whatsoever. This means some kind of separation is in order though it is worth noting that YouTube has already done something like this back in 2015 when it released a dedicated YouTube Gaming apps and website[34], until it abandoned

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[34] https://youtube.googleblog.com/2015/06/a-youtube-built-for-gamers.html

the whole idea several years later[35]. But whereas the objective then clearly was to establish a live streaming service as a competitor to Twitch.tv, this is a very different story.

The main issue in need of resolution is that once established the link between gaming and reactionary ideology cannot be severed if the gaming content on Web 2.0 platforms remains treated on equal grounds with all other topics. The algorithms will keep coming back to this association and keep normalizing and shoving increasingly problematic material down people's throats. This in turn creates more problems for the website itself as it needs to find ways of policing the more extreme deviations, which then inevitably results in enough cases of questionable censorship to add fuel to even more reactionary voices. Removing gaming content from the rest of the platform on the basis of changing how people engage with it and refocusing the value and meaning-creation processes behind it has the potential to create a healthier ecosystem where it would be much more difficult for the conflicts of the outside world to bleed in.

The above is but a single proposition on how to utilize the content of this text in an attempt to contribute to the betterment of our present online world. Like all socio-technical products of our civilization the Internet and Web 2.0 reproduce the dominant traits of the environment they were created in so what was once hailed for its democratizing, educational, and empowerment potentials, ended up largely subverted by the enormous gravitational pull of capitalism (McChesney, 2013). But that does not mean it is all lost. On the contrary – it means there is even more to be gained.

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[35] https://youtube.googleblog.com/2018/09/gaming-gets-new-home-on-youtube.html

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APPENDIX I: Comment function data sets

Kay's "Dark Souls" Let's Play (Blind Run) – Episodes 48 & 49 – "Sen's Fortress"

Comment Function Tag (CFT) data, collected on the 7th of March, 2017

Comments Total – 151

CFTs Total – 197 (Functional Density = 1.305)

[a1] praise / support / thanks (general) – 13

[a2] praise (gameplay) – 22

[a3] insult / negative appraisal / "trolling" – 1

[a4] technical (stream) – 1

[a5] technical / design (game) – 8

[b1] player line quote / favourite moment reference – 20

[b2] reaction to / anticipation of gameplay event – 13

[c1] advice / know-how / lore (systems/items/skills) – 18

[c2] advice / know-how / lore (level/enemies/npcs) – 28

[c3] acknowledges personal learning / discovery – 12

[c4] shares personal experience – 20

[c5] makes an inquiry (on topic) – 4

[c6] answers a question (on topic) – 5

[c7] speculation (on topic) – 2

[d1] reference to another game – 6

[d2] reference to other YouTube channel(s) – 1

[d3] off topic, or otherwise irrelevant – 3

[d4] viewer exchange fragment (also jokes/memes) – 9

[d5] nondescript / unknown – 2

[d6] summary of events / fan fiction – 2

[s1] comment by the player – 7

[s2] spoiler – 0

CFT Frequency

Pie chart with the following values:

- [d6], 2
- [s2], 0
- [d5], 3
- [s1], 7
- [d3], 3
- [d4], 9
- [a1], 13
- [d2], 1
- [a2], 22
- [c7], 2
- [d1], 6
- [a3], 1
- [a4], 1
- [c6], 5
- [a5], 8
- [c5], 4
- [c4], 20
- [b1], 20
- [c3], 12
- [b2], 13
- [c2], 28
- [c1], 18

Legend:
[a1] [a2] [a3] [a4] [a5] [b1] [b2] [c1] [c2] [c3] [c4] [c5] [c6] [c7] [d1] [d2] [d3] [d4] [d5] [d6] [s1] [s2]

CFT Frequency – Total Percentages by Category

A] **Evaluation** Total – 22, 84%

B] **Affect** Total – 16, 75%

C] **Knowledge** Total – 45, 18%

D] **Others** Total – 11, 68%

S] **Special** Total – 3, 55%

KinetikGTR's "Dark Souls" Let's Play (Blind Run) – Episodes 29, 30 & 31 – "Sen's Fortress"

Comment Function Tag (CFT) data, collected on the 7th of March, 2017

Comments Total – 168

CFTs Total – 192 (Functional Density = 1.143)

[a1] praise / support / thanks (general) – 13

[a2] praise (gameplay) – 2

[a3] insult / negative appraisal / "trolling" – 5

[a4] technical (stream) – 2

[a5] technical / design (game) – 2

[b1] player line quote / favourite moment reference – 11

[b2] reaction to / anticipation of gameplay event – 20

[c1] advice / know-how / lore (systems/items/skills) – 46

[c2] advice / know-how / lore (level/enemies/npcs) – 32

[c3] acknowledges personal learning / discovery – 1

[c4] shares personal experience – 7

[c5] makes an inquiry (on topic) – 3

[c6] answers a question (on topic) – 2

[c7] speculation (on topic) – 1

[d1] reference to another game – 5

[d2] reference to other YouTube channel(s) – 5

[d3] off topic, or otherwise irrelevant – 5

[d4] viewer exchange fragment (also jokes/memes) – 14

[d5] nondescript / unknown – 4

[d6] summary of events / fan fiction – 0

[s1] comment by the player – 3

[s2] spoiler – 9
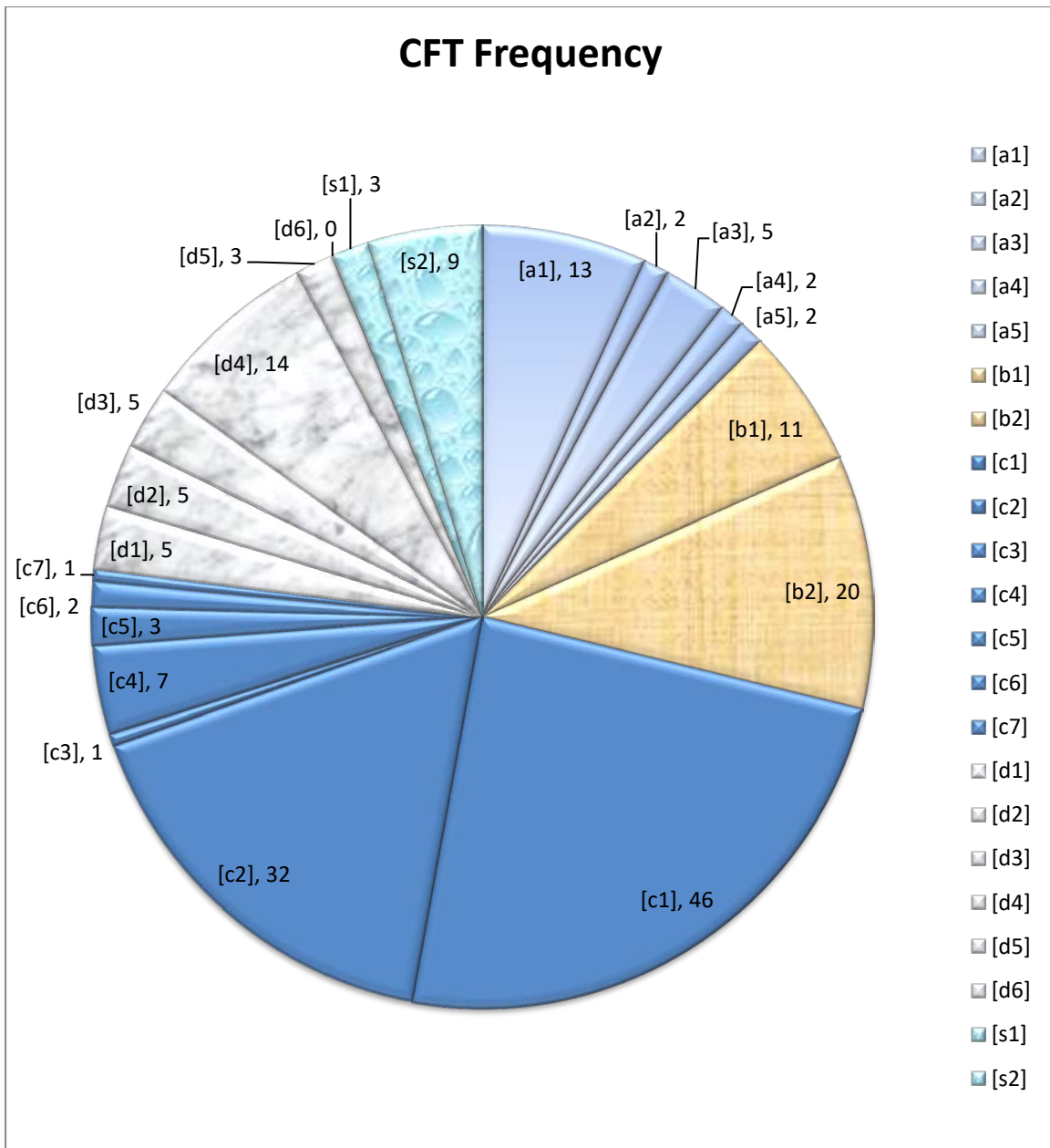
CFT Frequency

CFT Frequency – Total Percentages by Category

A] **Evaluation** Total – 12, 5%

B] **Affect** Total – 16, 14%

C] **Knowledge** Total – 47, 92%

D] **Others** Total – 17, 19%

S] **Special** Total – 6, 25%

Masterkizz' "Dark Souls" Let's Play (Blind Run) – Episodes 30, 31 & 32 – "Sen's Fortress"

Comment Function Tag (CFT) data, collected on the 7th of March, 2017

Comments Total – 233

CFTs Total – 267 (Functional Density = 1.146)

[a1] praise / support / thanks (general) – 47

[a2] praise (gameplay) – 5

[a3] insult / negative appraisal / "trolling" – 1

[a4] technical (stream) – 3

[a5] technical / design (game) – 8

[b1] player line quote / favourite moment reference – 31

[b2] reaction to / anticipation of gameplay event – 14

[c1] advice / know-how / lore (systems/items/skills) – 36

[c2] advice / know-how / lore (level/enemies/npcs) – 23

[c3] acknowledges personal learning / discovery – 1

[c4] shares personal experience – 11

[c5] makes an inquiry (on topic) – 6

[c6] answers a question (on topic) – 4

[c7] speculation (on topic) – 0

[d1] reference to another game – 21

[d2] reference to other YouTube channel(s) – 5

[d3] off topic, or otherwise irrelevant – 13

[d4] viewer exchange fragment (also jokes/memes) – 28

[d5] nondescript / unknown – 6

[d6] summary of events / fan fiction – 0

[s1] comment by the player – 0

[s2] spoiler – 4
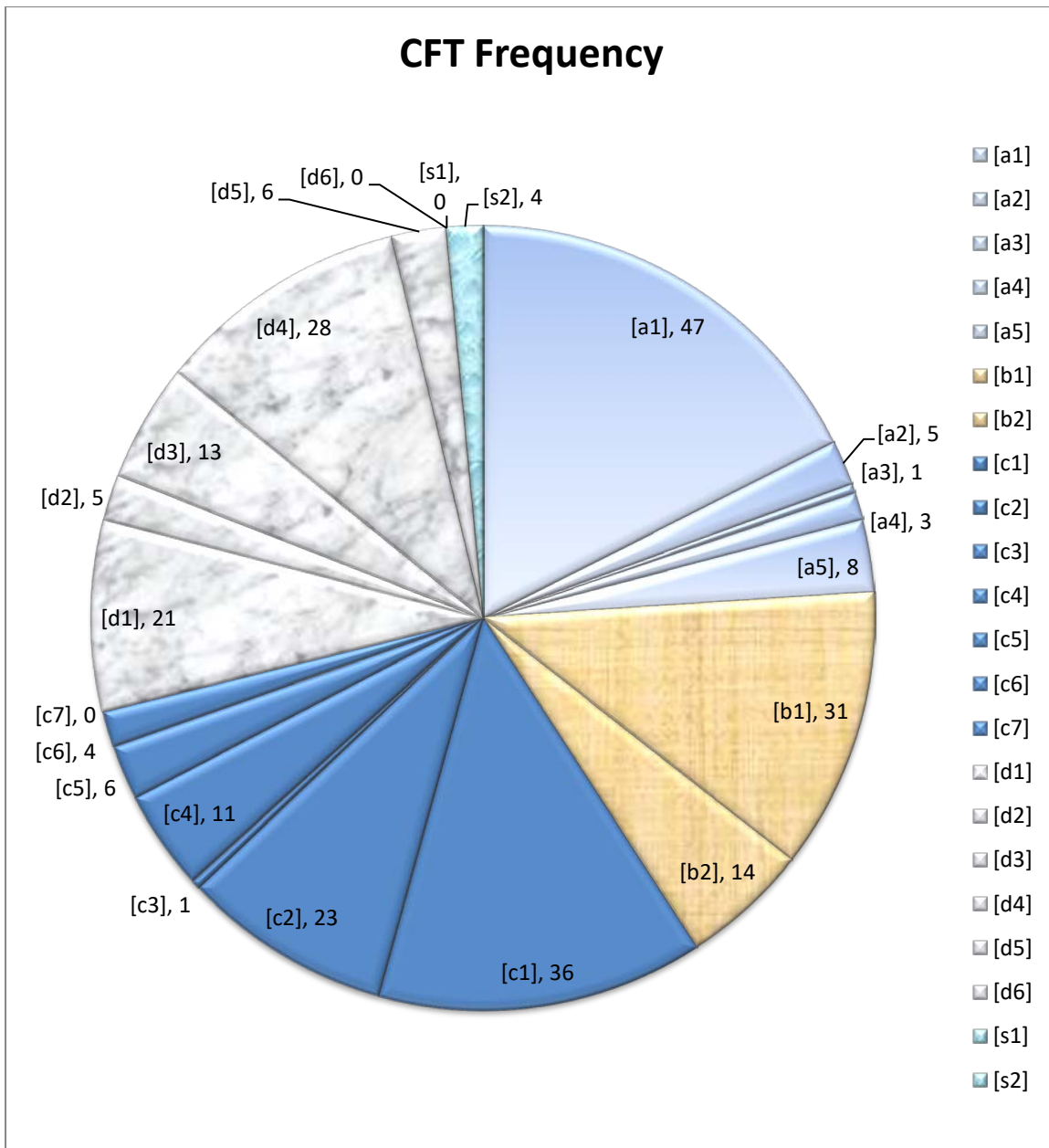
CFT Frequency – Total Percentages by Category

A] **Evaluation** Total – 23, 97%

B] **Affect** Total – 16, 85%

C] **Knowledge** Total – 30, 34%

D] **Others** Total – 27, 34%

S] **Special** Total – 1, 50%

Odd's "Dark Souls" Let's Play (Blind Run) – Episodes 25, 26 & 27 – "Sen's Fortress"

*Comment Function Tag (CFT) data, collected on the 7*th *of March, 2017*

Comments Total – 517

CFTs Total – 633 (Functional Density = 1.224)

[a1] praise / support / thanks (general) – 21

[a2] praise (gameplay) – 37

[a3] insult / negative appraisal / "trolling" – 13

[a4] technical (stream) – 5

[a5] technical / design (game) – 13

[b1] player line quote / favourite moment reference – 42

[b2] reaction to / anticipation of gameplay event – 47

[c1] advice / know-how / lore (systems/items/skills) – 113

[c2] advice / know-how / lore (level/enemies/npcs) – 154

[c3] acknowledges personal learning / discovery – 3

[c4] shares personal experience – 39

[c5] makes an inquiry (on topic) – 23

[c6] answers a question (on topic) – 20

[c7] speculation (on topic) – 10

[d1] reference to another game – 17

[d2] reference to other YouTube channel(s) – 2

[d3] off topic, or otherwise irrelevant – 1

[d4] viewer exchange fragment (also jokes/memes) – 54

[d5] nondescript / unknown – 10

[d6] summary of events / fan fiction – 7

[s1] comment by the player – 1

[s2] spoiler – 1

CFT Frequency

[d6], 7   [s1], 1   [s2], 1
[d5], 10
[d3], 1
[d1], 17   [d2], 2   [d4], 54   [a1], 21   [a2], 37
[c7], 10
[a3], 12
[a4], 6
[a5], 13
[c6], 20
[c5], 23
[b1], 42
[c4], 39
[b2], 47
[c3], 3
[c2], 154
[c1], 113

Legend: [a1] [a2] [a3] [a4] [a5] [b1] [b2] [c1] [c2] [c3] [c4] [c5] [c6] [c7] [d1] [d2] [d3] [d4] [d5] [d6] [s1] [s2]

CFT Frequency – Total Percentages by Category

A] **Evaluation** Total – 14, 06%

B] **Affect** Total – 14, 06%

C] **Knowledge** Total – 57, 19%

D] **Others** Total – 14, 38%

S] **Special** Total – 0, 31%

Galm's "Deus Ex" Let's Play (Blind Run) – Episodes 36, 37 & 38 – "Golem City"

Comment Function Tag (CFT) data, collected on the 19th of March, 2017

Comments Total – 110

CFTs Total – 113 (Functional Density = 1.027)

[a1] praise / thanks / support (general) – 6

[a2] praise (gameplay) – 0

[a3] insult / negative appraisal / "trolling" – 4

[a4] technical (stream) – 1

[a5] technical / design (game) – 5

[b1] player line quote / favourite moment reference – 21

[b2] reaction to / anticipation of gameplay event – 5

[c1] advice / know-how / lore (systems/items/skills) – 9

[c2] advice / know-how / lore (level/enemies/npcs) – 1

[c3] acknowledges personal learning / discovery – 1

[c4] shares personal experience – 1

[c5] makes an inquiry (on topic) – 7

[c6] answers a question (on topic) – 5

[c7] speculation (on topic) – 4

[d1] reference to another game – 10

[d2] reference to other YouTube channel(s) – 0

[d3] off topic, or otherwise irrelevant – 8

[d4] viewer exchange fragment (also jokes/memes) – 23

[d5] nondescript / unknown – 1

[d6] summary of events / fan fiction – 1

[s1] comment by the player – 0

[s2] spoiler – 0
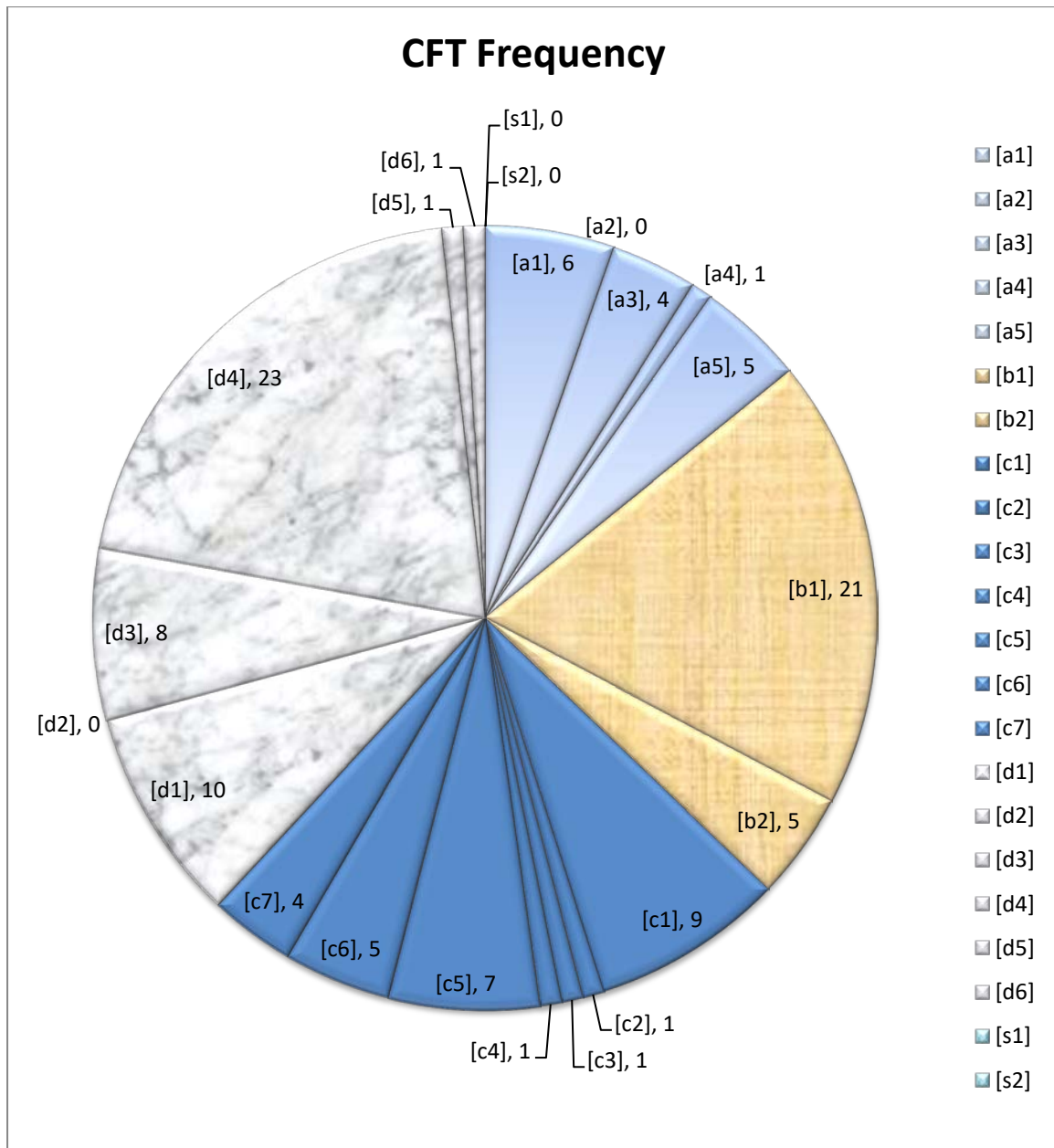
CFT Frequency

CFT Frequency – Total Percentages by Category

A] **Evaluation** Total – 14, 16%

B] **Affect** Total – 23, 01%

C] **Knowledge** Total – 24, 78%

D] **Others** Total – 38, 05%

S] **Special** Total – 0%

Odd's "Deus Ex" Let's Play (Blind Run) – Episodes 15 & 16 – "Golem City"

Comment Function Tag (CFT) data collected on the 19th of March, 2017

Comments Total – 172

CFTs Total – 195 (Functional Density = 1.134)

[a1] praise / thanks / support (general) – 19

[a2] praise (gameplay) – 4

[a3] insult / negative appraisal / "trolling" – 4

[a4] technical (stream) – 5

[a5] technical / design (game) – 3

[b1] player line quote / favourite moment reference – 23

[b2] reaction to / anticipation of gameplay event – 6

[c1] advice / know-how / lore (systems/items/skills) – 20

[c2] advice / know-how / lore (level/enemies/npcs) – 21

[c3] acknowledges personal learning / discovery – 2

[c4] shares personal experience – 2

[c5] makes an inquiry (on topic) – 11

[c6] answers a question (on topic) – 10

[c7] speculation (on topic) – 8

[d1] reference to another game – 9

[d2] reference to other YouTube channel(s) – 0

[d3] off topic, or otherwise irrelevant – 19

[d4] viewer exchange fragment (also jokes/memes) – 22

[d5] nondescript / unknown – 3

[d6] summary of events / fan fiction – 0

[s1] comment by the player – 3

[s2] spoiler – 1
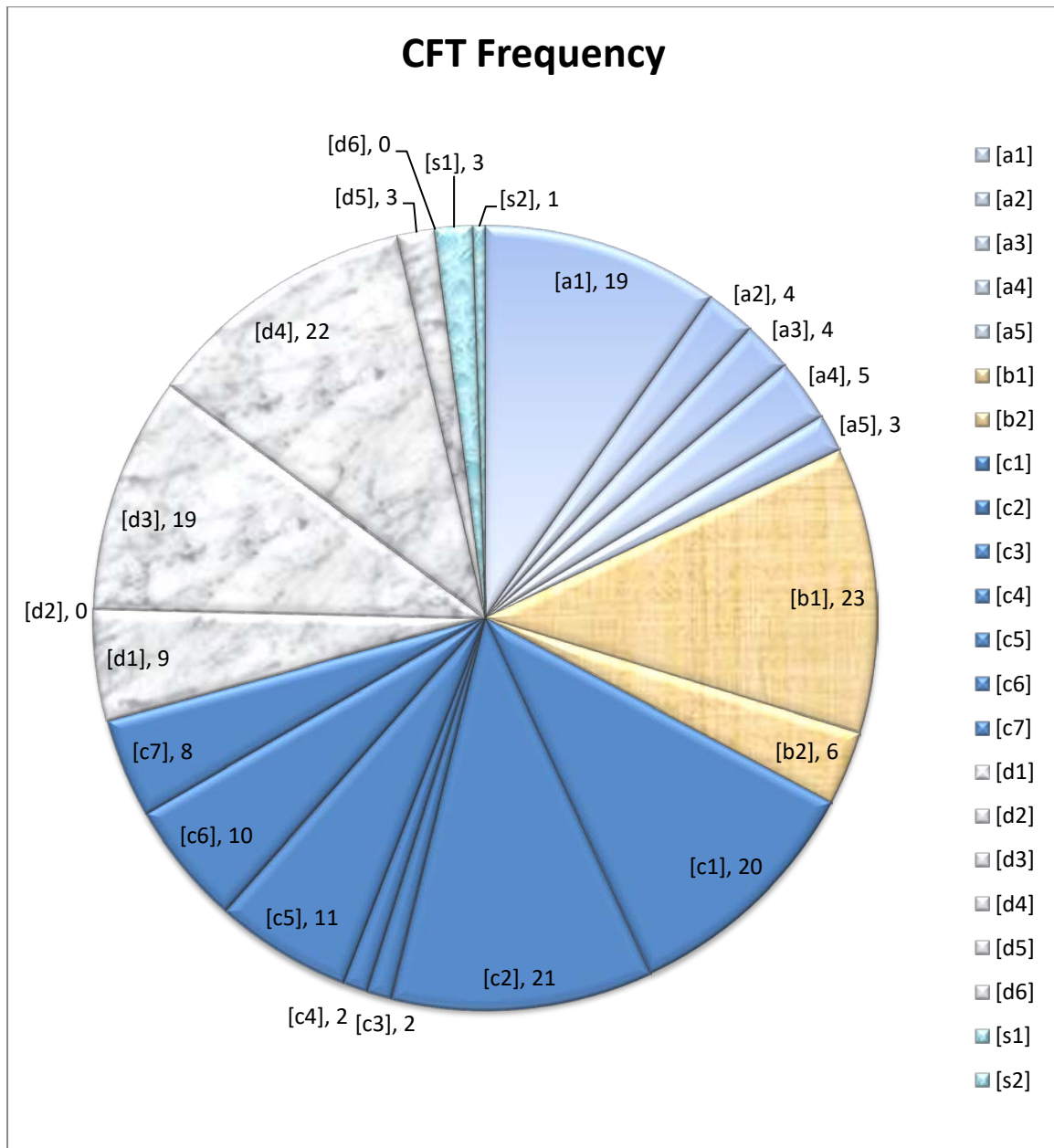
CFT Frequency

CFT Frequency – Total Percentages by Category

A] **Evaluation** Total – 17, 95%

B] **Affect** Total – 14, 87%

C] **Knowledge** Total – 37, 95%

D] **Others** Total – 27, 18%

S] **Special** Total – 2, 05%

FightinCowboy's "Nioh" Let's Play (Blind Run) – Episodes 8, 9 & 10 – "Deep in the Shadows"

Comment Function Tag (CFT) data collected on the 19th of March, 2017

Comments Total – 136

CFTs Total – 154 (Functional Density = 1.132)

[a1] praise / support / thanks (general) – 8

[a2] praise (gameplay) – 1

[a3] insult / negative appraisal / "trolling" – 2

[a4] technical (stream) – 1

[a5] technical / design (game) – 11

[b1] player line quote / favourite moment reference – 7

[b2] reaction to / anticipation of gameplay event – 11

[c1] advice / know-how / lore (systems/items/skills) – 6

[c2] advice / know-how / lore (level/enemies/npcs) – 10

[c3] acknowledges personal learning / discovery – 4

[c4] shares personal experience – 22

[c5] makes an inquiry (on topic) – 11

[c6] answers a question (on topic) – 4

[c7] speculation (on topic) – 1

[d1] reference to another game – 17

[d2] reference to other YouTube channel(s) – 0

[d3] off topic, or otherwise irrelevant – 8

[d4] viewer exchange fragment (also jokes/memes) – 22

[d5] nondescript / unknown – 1

[d6] summary of events / fan fiction – 4

[s1] comment by the player – 3

[s2] spoiler – 0

CFT Frequency

Pie chart legend: [a1], [a2], [a3], [a4], [a5], [b1], [b2], [c1], [c2], [c3], [c4], [c5], [c6], [c7], [d1], [d2], [d3], [d4], [d5], [d6], [s1], [s2]

Pie chart data labels: [s1], 3 · [d6], 4 · [s2], 0 · [a2], 1 · [a3], 2 · [d5], 1 · [a1], 8 · [a4], 1 · [d4], 22 · [a5], 11 · [b1], 7 · [d3], 8 · [b2], 11 · [d2], 0 · [c1], 6 · [d1], 17 · [c2], 10 · [c7], 1 · [c3], 4 · [c6], 4 · [c5], 11 · [c4], 22
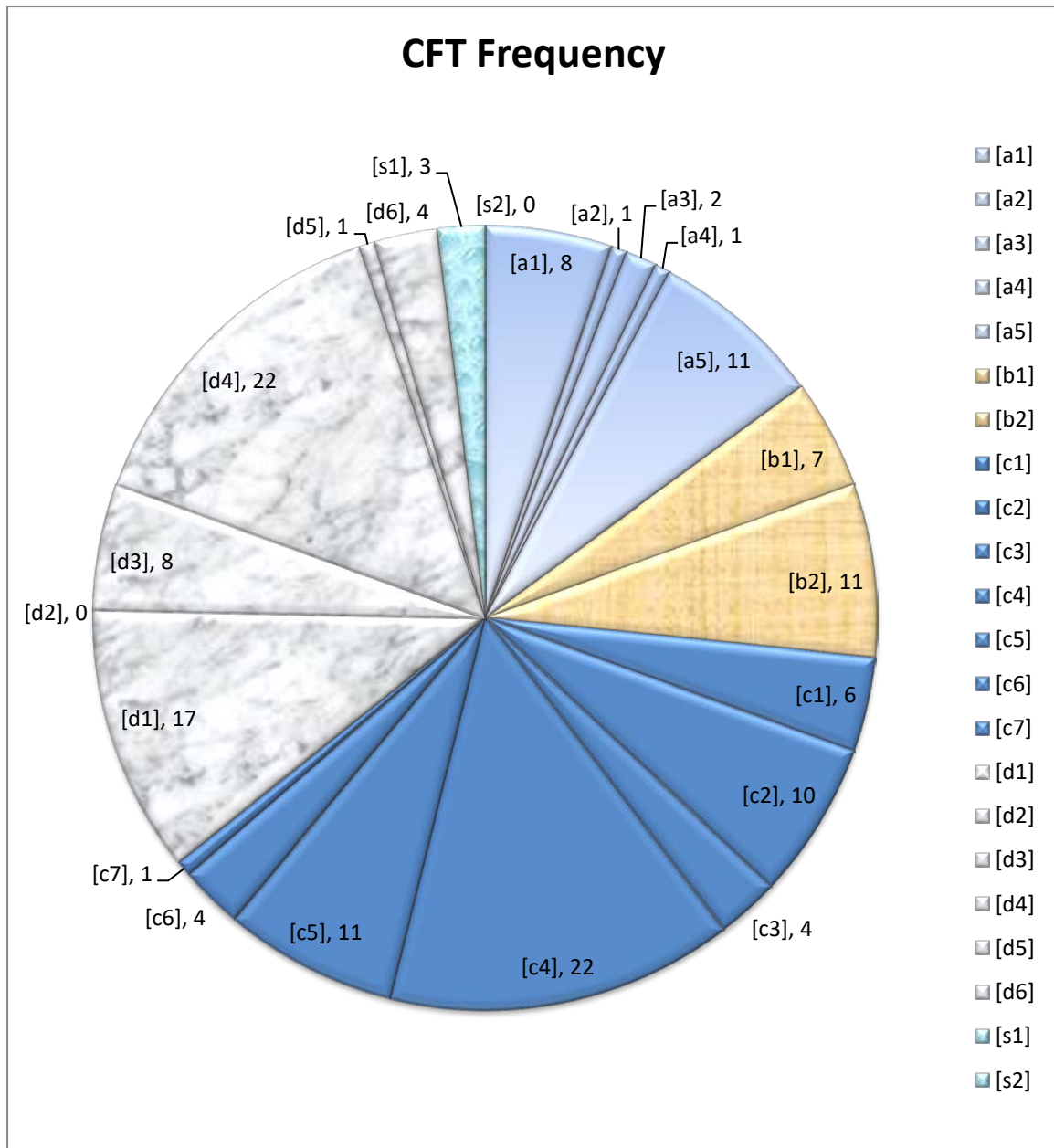
CFT Frequency – Total Percentages by Category

A] **Evaluation** Total – 14, 93%

B] **Affect** Total – 11, 69%

C] **Knowledge** Total – 37, 66%

D] **Others** Total – 33, 77%

S] **Special** Total – 1, 95%

Odd's "Nioh" Let's Play (Blind Run) – Episodes 7, 8 & 9 – "Deep in the Shadows"

Comment Function Tag (CFT) data collected on the 19th of March, 2017

Comments Total – 298

CFTs Total – 332 (Functional Density = 1.114)

[a1] praise / support / thanks (general) – 21

[a2] praise (gameplay) – 10

[a3] insult / negative appraisal / "trolling" – 1

[a4] technical (stream) – 2

[a5] technical / design (game) – 8

[b1] player line quote / favourite moment reference – 29

[b2] reaction to / anticipation of gameplay event – 22

[c1] advice / know-how / lore (systems/items/skills) – 47

[c2] advice / know-how / lore (level/enemies/npcs) – 64

[c3] acknowledges personal learning / discovery – 6

[c4] shares personal experience – 9

[c5] makes an inquiry (on topic) – 12

[c6] answers a question (on topic) – 10

[c7] speculation (on topic) – 2

[d1] reference to another game – 34

[d2] reference to other YouTube channel(s) – 2

[d3] off topic, or otherwise irrelevant – 16

[d4] viewer exchange fragment (also jokes/memes) – 28

[d5] nondescript / unknown – 7

[d6] summary of events / fan fiction – 3

[s1] comment by the player – 0

[s2] spoiler – 0
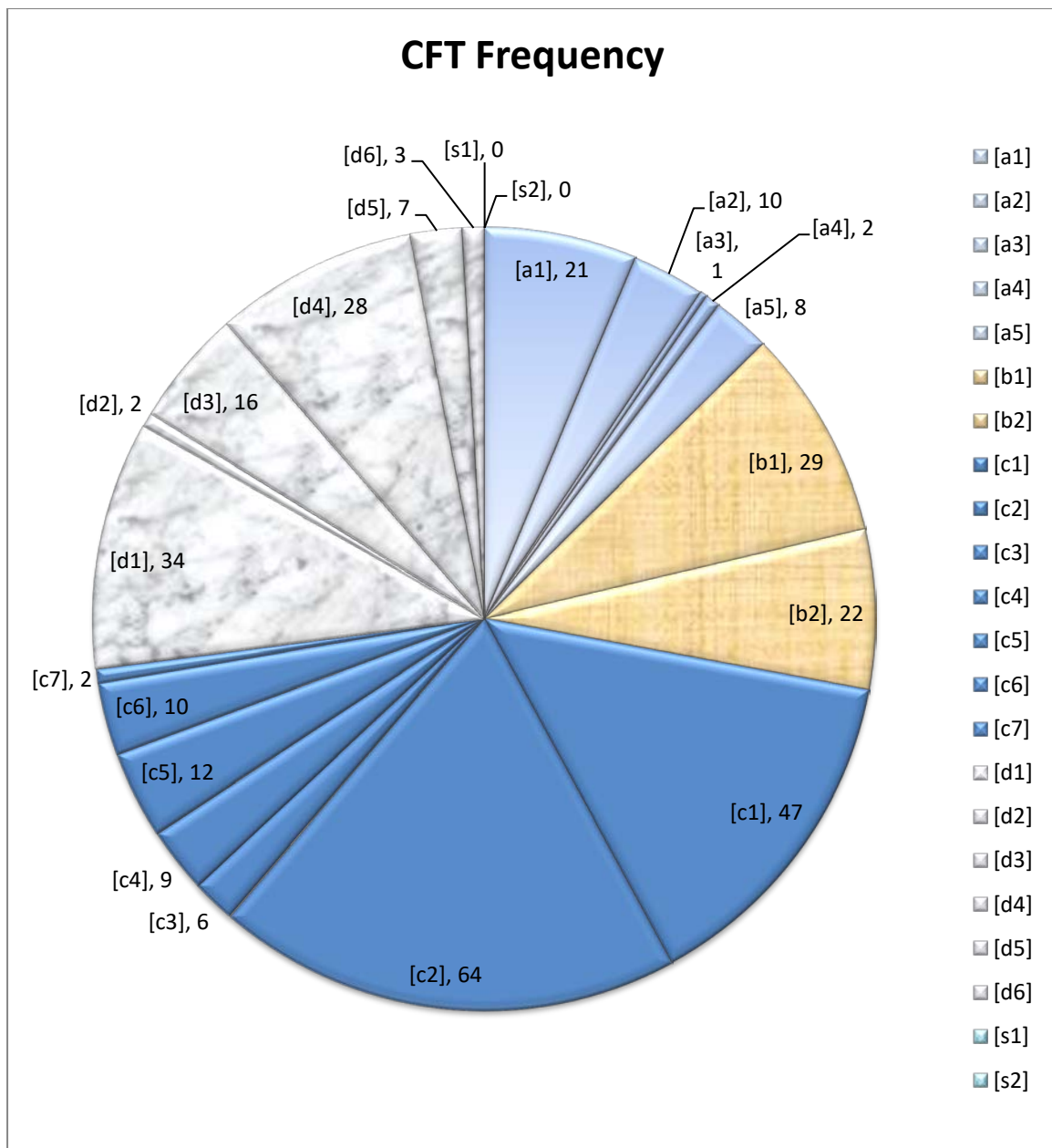
CFT Frequency

CFT Frequency – Total Percentages by Category

A] **Evaluation** Total – 12, 35%

B] **Affect** Total – 15, 36%

C] **Knowledge** Total – 45, 18%

D] **Others** Total – 27, 11%

S] **Special** Total – 0%

CenterStrain's "Resident Evil 7" Let's Play (Blind Run) – Episodes 6 & 7

Comment Function Tag (CFT) data collected on the 19th of March, 2017

Comments Total – 144

CFTs Total – 156 (Functional Density = 1.083)

[a1] praise / thanks / support (general) – 24

[a2] praise (gameplay) – 2

[a3] insult / negative appraisal / "trolling" – 1

[a4] technical (stream) – 12

[a5] technical / design (game) – 13

[b1] player line quote / favourite moment reference – 8

[b2] reaction to / anticipation of gameplay event – 11

[c1] advice / know-how / lore (systems/items/skills) – 14

[c2] advice / know-how / lore (level/enemies/npcs) – 7

[c3] acknowledges personal learning / discovery – 0

[c4] shares personal experience – 0

[c5] makes an inquiry (on topic) – 4

[c6] answers a question (on topic) – 3

[c7] speculation (on topic) – 1

[d1] reference to another game – 4

[d2] reference to other YouTube channel(s) – 3
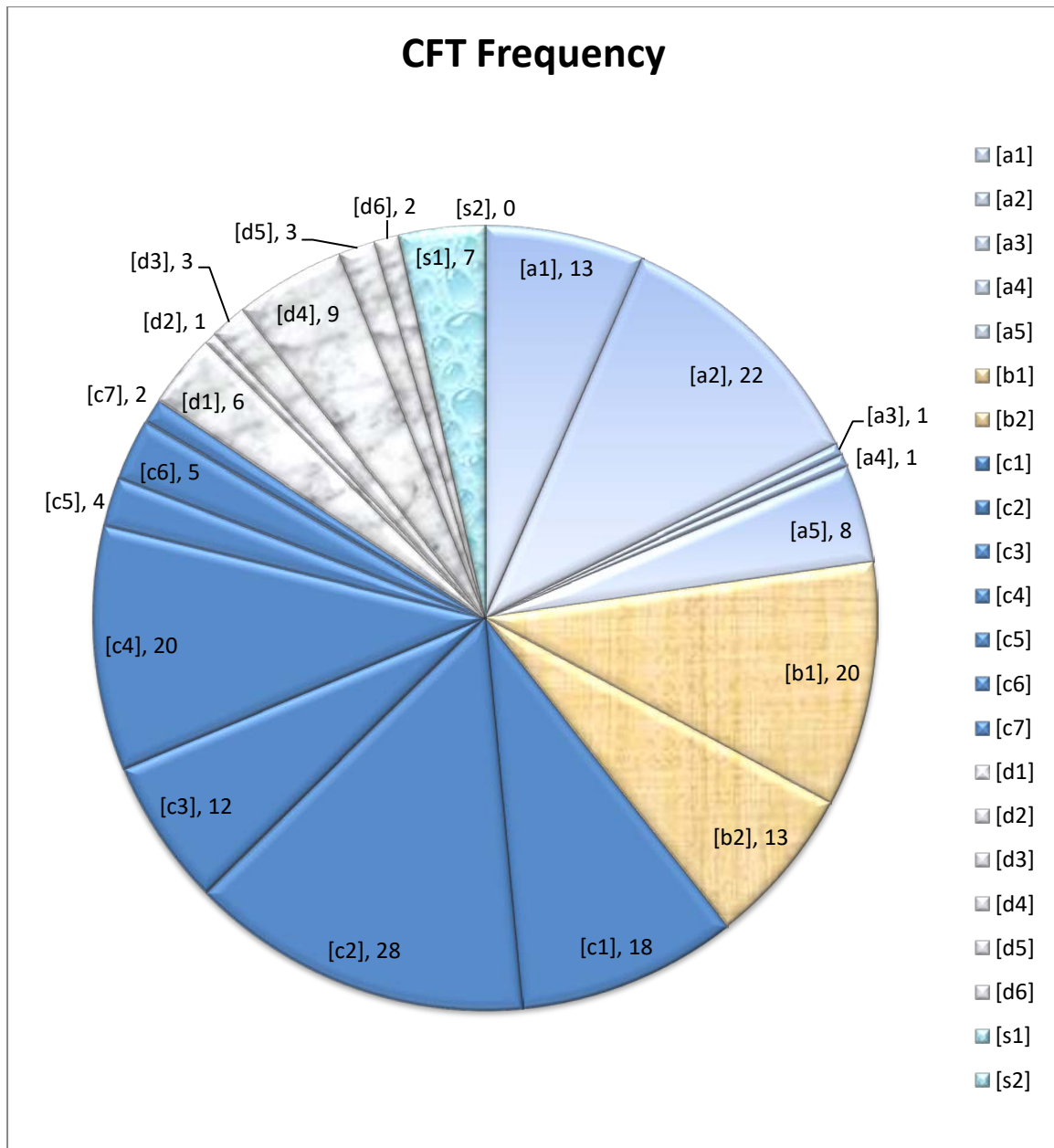
[d3] off topic, or otherwise irrelevant – 8

[d4] viewer exchange fragment (also jokes/memes) – 21

[d5] nondescript / unknown – 7

[d6] summary of events / fan fiction – 3

[s1] comment by the player – 10

[s2] spoiler – 0

CFT Frequency

Pie chart labels:
- [s2], 0
- [d6], 3
- [s1], 10
- [a1], 24
- [d5], 7
- [a2], 2
- [a3], 1
- [d4], 21
- [a4], 12
- [d3], 8
- [a5], 13
- [d2], 3
- [d1], 4
- [c7], 1
- [b1], 8
- [c6], 3
- [c5], 4
- [b2], 11
- [c4], 0
- [c2], 7
- [c3], 0
- [c1], 14

Legend: [a1] [a2] [a3] [a4] [a5] [b1] [b2] [c1] [c2] [c3] [c4] [c5] [c6] [c7] [d1] [d2] [d3] [d4] [d5] [d6] [s1] [s2]
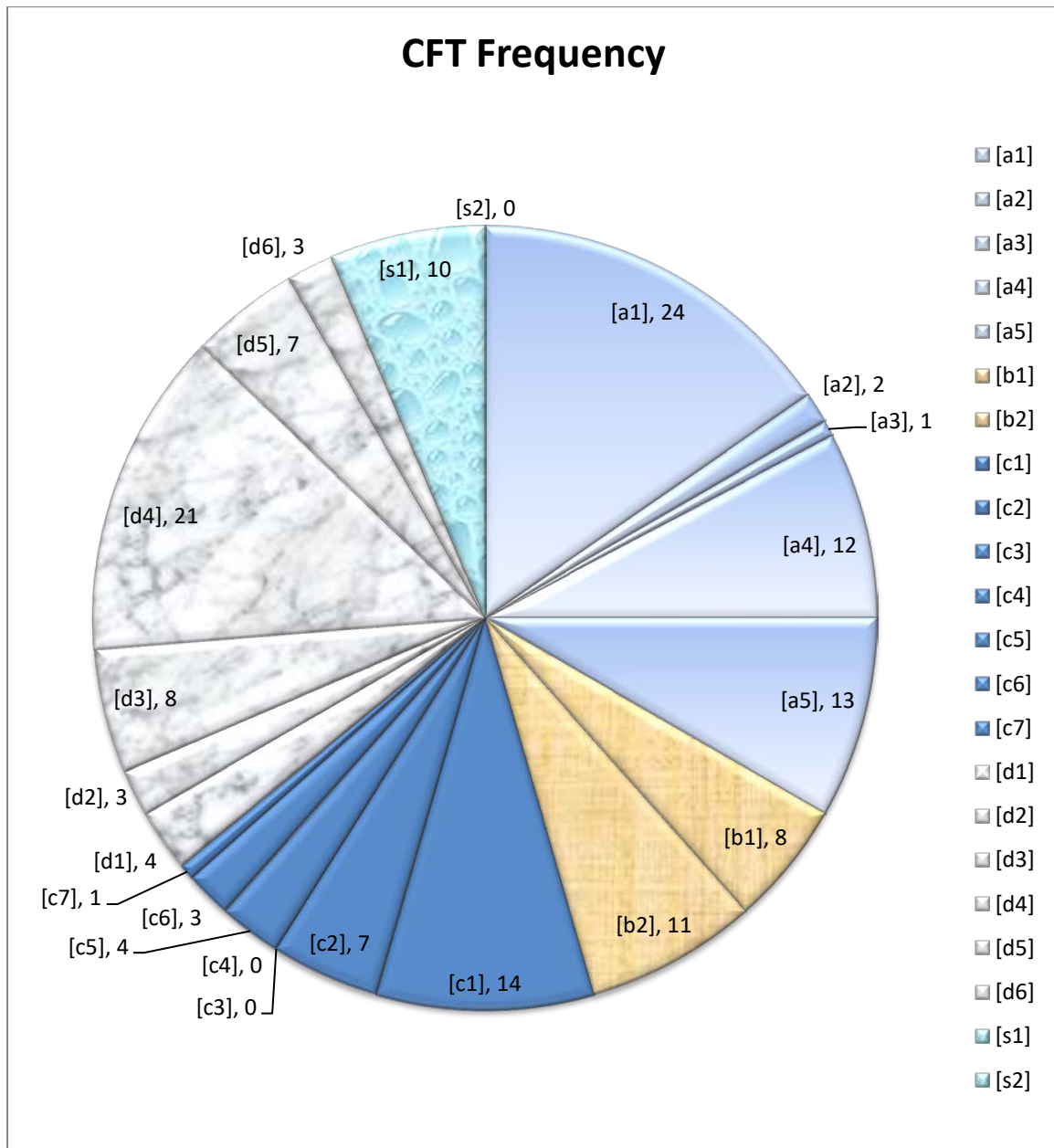
CFT Frequency – Total Percentages by Category

A] **Evaluation** Total – 33, 33%

B] **Affect** Total – 12, 18%

C] **Knowledge** Total – 18, 59%

D] **Others** Total – 29, 49%

S] **Special** Total – 6, 41%

FightinCowboy's "Resident Evil 7" Let's Play (Blind Run) – Episodes 6, 7 & 8

Comment Function Tag (CFT) data collected on the 19th of March, 2017

Comments Total – 132

CFTs Total – 142 (Functional Density = 1.076)

[a1] praise / support / thanks (general) – 13

[a2] praise (gameplay) – 0

[a3] insult / negative appraisal / "trolling" – 4

[a4] technical (stream) – 20

[a5] technical / design (game) – 2

[b1] player line quote / favourite moment reference – 9

[b2] reaction to / anticipation of gameplay event – 16

[c1] advice / know-how / lore (systems/items/skills) – 15

[c2] advice / know-how / lore (level/enemies/npcs) – 12

[c3] acknowledges personal learning / discovery – 0

[c4] shares personal experience – 3

[c5] makes an inquiry (on topic) – 3

[c6] answers a question (on topic) – 2

[c7] speculation (on topic) – 2

[d1] reference to another game – 5

[d2] reference to other YouTube channel(s) – 2

[d3] off topic, or otherwise irrelevant – 9

[d4] viewer exchange fragment (also jokes/memes) – 21

[d5] nondescript / unknown – 1

[d6] summary of events / fan fiction – 1

[s1] comment by the player – 1

[s2] spoiler – 1

CFT Frequency

[s1], 1
[d6], 1
[d5], 1
[s2], 1
[d4], 21
[a2], 0
[a3], 4
[a1], 13
[d3], 9
[d2], 2
[d1], 5
[a4], 20
[c7], 2
[c6], 2
[c5], 3
[a5], 2
[c4], 3
[b1], 9
[c3], 0
[c2], 12
[c1], 15
[b2], 16

[a1]
[a2]
[a3]
[a4]
[a5]
[b1]
[b2]
[c1]
[c2]
[c3]
[c4]
[c5]
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[d3]
[d4]
[d5]
[d6]
[s1]
[s2]
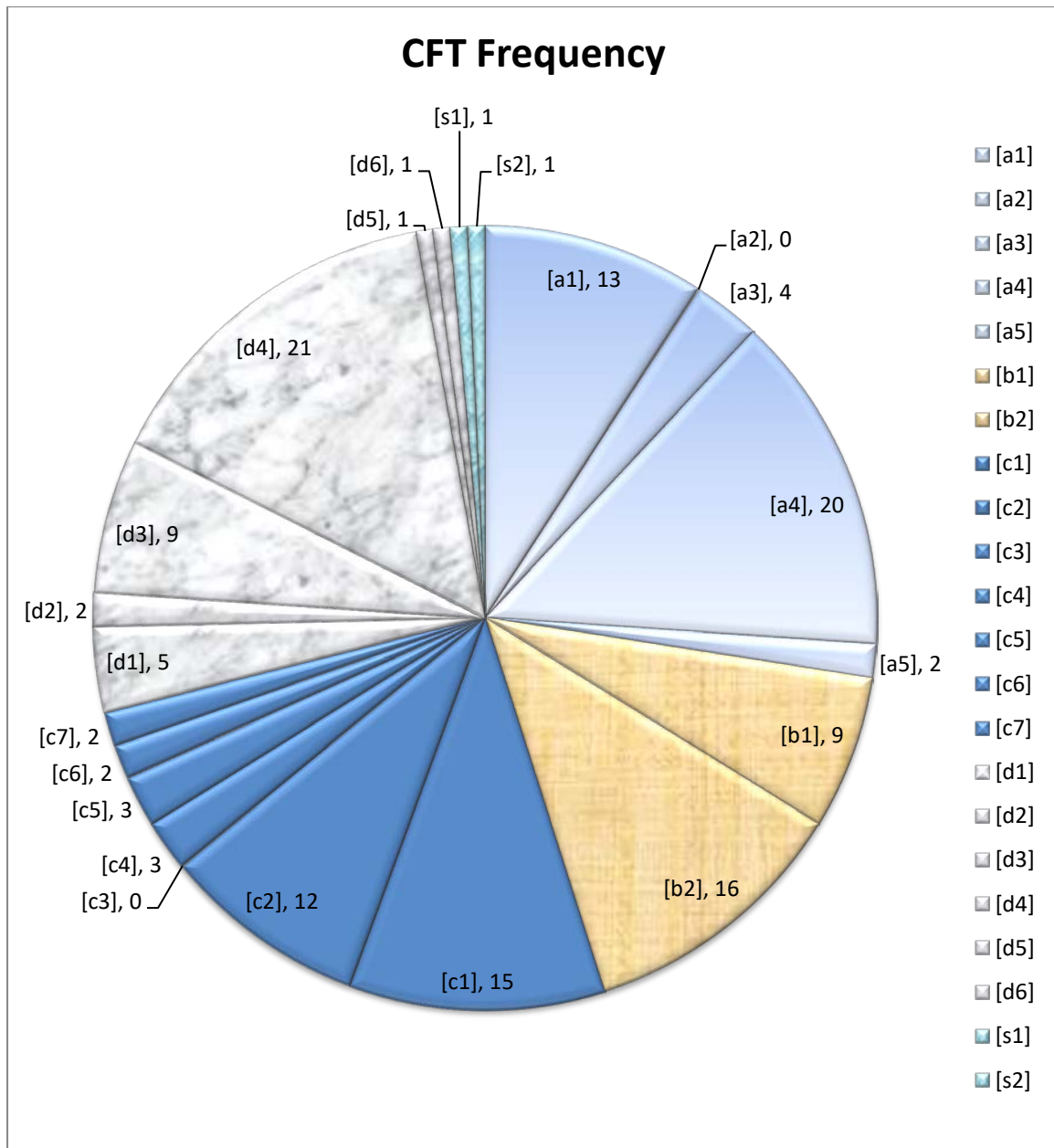
CFT Frequency – Total Percentages by Category

A] **Evaluation** Total – 27, 46%

B] **Affect** Total – 17, 61%

C] **Knowledge** Total – 26, 06%

D] **Others** Total – 27, 46%

S] **Special** Total – 1, 41%

<u>Galm's "Resident Evil 7" Let's Play (Blind Run) – Episodes 5 & 6</u>

Comment Function Tag (CFT) data collected on the 19th of March, 2017

Comments Total – 160

CFTs Total – 171 (Functional Density = 1.069)

[a1] praise / thanks / support (general) – 15

[a2] praise (gameplay) – 4

[a3] insult / negative appraisal / "trolling" – 3

[a4] technical (stream) – 2

[a5] technical / design (game) – 11

[b1] player line quote / favourite moment reference – 15

[b2] reaction to / anticipation of gameplay event – 18

[c1] advice / know-how / lore (systems/items/skills) – 6

[c2] advice / know-how / lore (level/enemies/npcs) – 4

[c3] acknowledges personal learning / discovery – 0

[c4] shares personal experience – 0

[c5] makes an inquiry (on topic) – 8

[c6] answers a question (on topic) – 4

[c7] speculation (on topic) – 13

[d1] reference to another game – 12

[d2] reference to other YouTube channel(s) – 1

[d3] off topic, or otherwise irrelevant – 23

[d4] viewer exchange fragment (also jokes/memes) – 35

[d5] nondescript / unknown – 3

[d6] summary of events / fan fiction – 2

[s1] comment by the player – 1

[s2] spoiler – 1
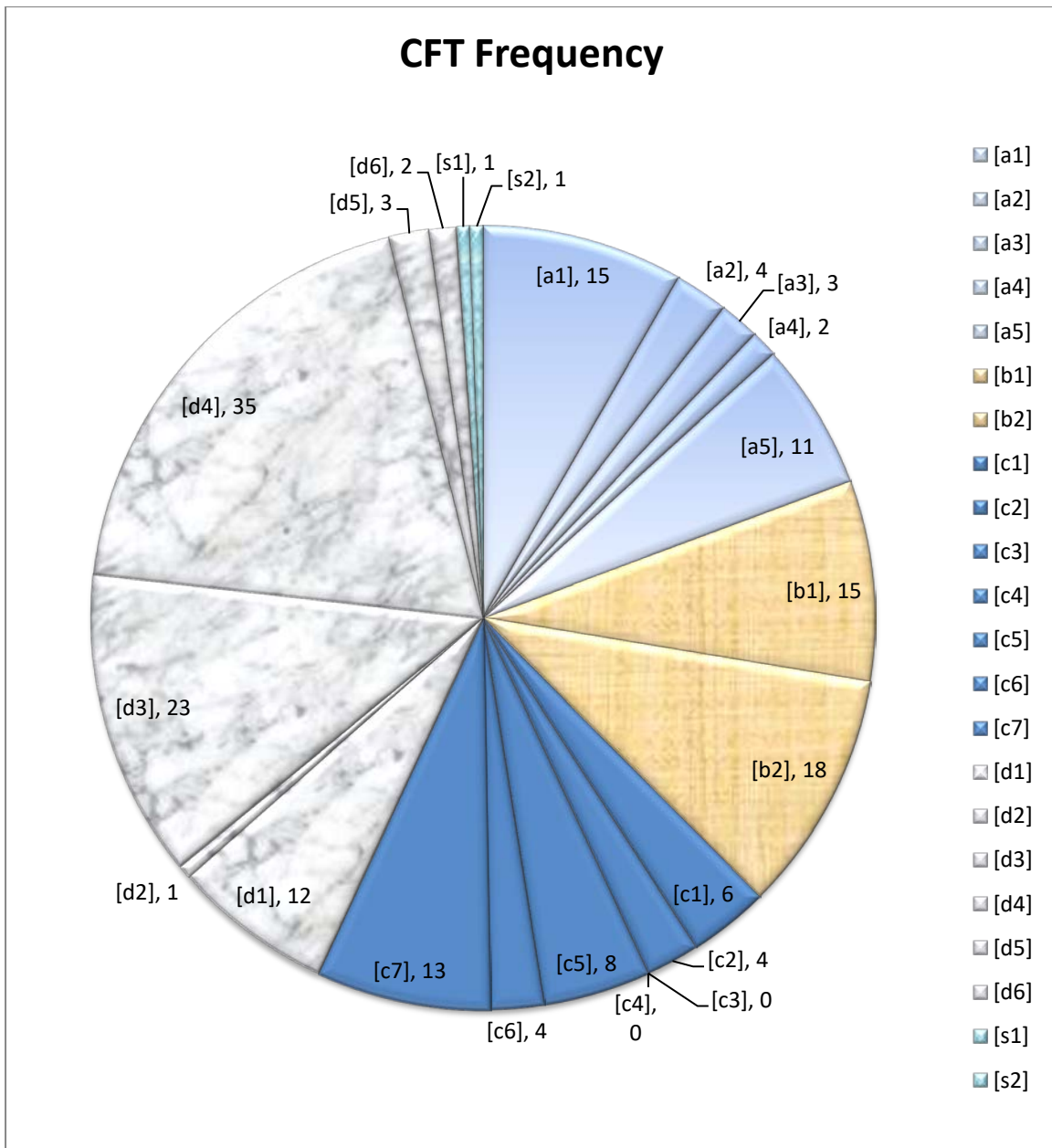
CFT Frequency

CFT Frequency – Total Percentages by Category

A] **Evaluation** Total – 20, 47%

B] **Affect** Total – 19, 30%

C] **Knowledge** Total – 20, 47%

D] **Others** Total – 38, 59%

S] **Special** Total – 1, 17%

Odd's "Resident Evil 7" Let's Play (Blind Run) – Episodes 7 & 8

Comment Function Tag (CFT) data collected on the 19th of March, 2017

Comments Total – 402

CFTs Total – 449 (Functional Density = 1.117)

[a1] praise /thanks / support (general) – 100

[a2] praise (gameplay) – 6

[a3] insult / negative appraisal / "trolling" – 3

[a4] technical (stream) – 7

[a5] technical / design (game) – 9

[b1] player line quote / favourite moment reference – 83

[b2] reaction to / anticipation of gameplay event – 51

[c1] advice / know-how / lore (systems/items/skills) – 13

[c2] advice / know-how / lore (level/enemies/npcs) – 39

[c3] acknowledges personal learning / discovery – 0

[c4] shares personal experience – 1

[c5] makes an inquiry (on topic) – 5

[c6] answers a question (on topic) – 3

[c7] speculation (on topic) – 10

[d1] reference to another game – 21

[d2] reference to other YouTube channel(s) – 11
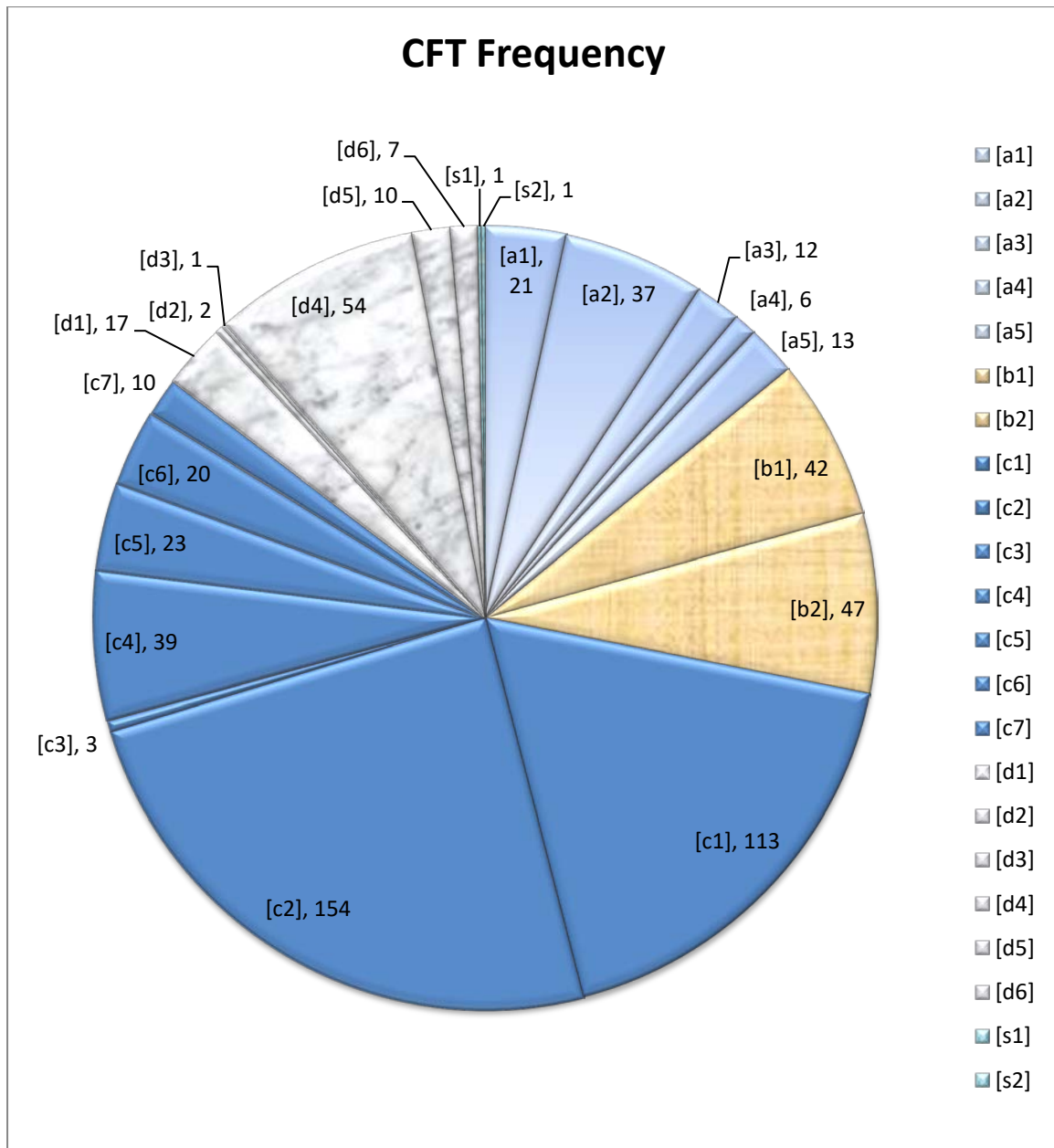
[d3] off topic, or otherwise irrelevant – 25

[d4] viewer exchange fragment (also jokes/memes) – 40

[d5] nondescript / unknown – 7

[d6] summary of events / fan fiction – 3

[s1] comment by the player – 11

[s2] spoiler – 1

CFT Frequency

[s1], 11

[d6], 3

[d5], 7

[s2], 1

[d4], 40

[d3], 25

[d2], 11

[d1], 21

[c7], 10

[c6], 3

[c5], 5

[c4], 1

[c2], 39

[c3], 0

[c1], 13

[b2], 51

[a1], 100

[a2], 6

[a3], 3

[a4], 7

[a5], 9

[b1], 83

Legend: [a1] [a2] [a3] [a4] [a5] [b1] [b2] [c1] [c2] [c3] [c4] [c5] [c6] [c7] [d1] [d2] [d3] [d4] [d5] [d6] [s1] [s2]
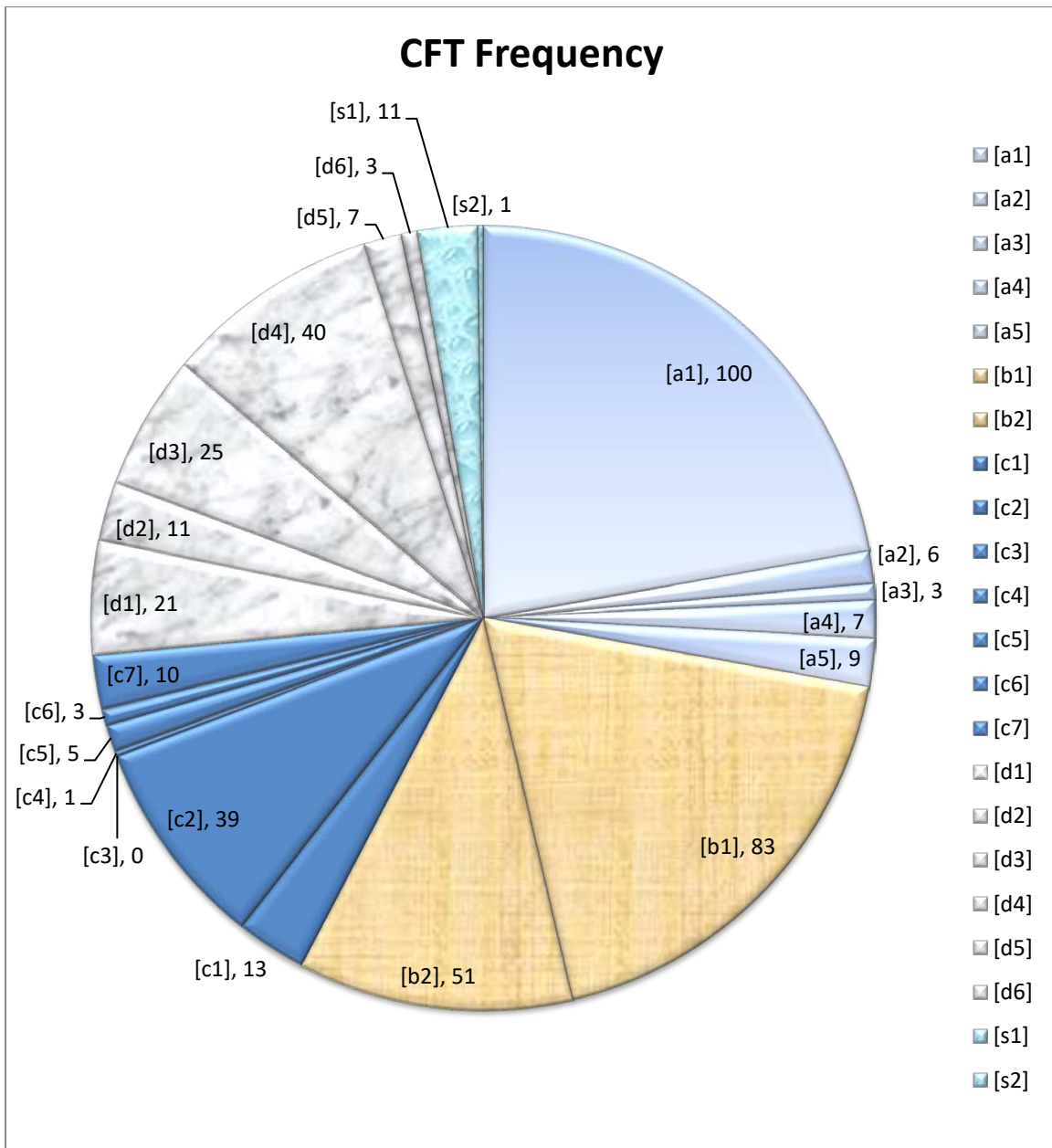
CFT Frequency – Total Percentages by Category

A] **Evaluation** Total – 27, 84%

B] **Affect** Total – 29, 84%

C] **Knowledge** Total – 15, 82%

D] **Others** Total – 23, 83%

S] **Special** Total – 2, 67%

APPENDIX II: Full content of the processed comments with assigned CFTs

Kay's "Dark Souls" Let's Play (Blind Run) – Episodes 48 & 49 – "Sen's Fortress"

[c3] I had no idea you could reach and kill the giant that opens the gate to sen's fortress. Cool secret!   Jonathan Walmsley

[b1] 48:56 - waited 48 episodes for this reaction. Wasn't disappointed.   Carlos FerrГJo

[b1] 29:45 that salty laugh Carlos FerrГJo

[b2] I've been awaiting the first encounter with a mimic for way too damn long...   uzumakiking

[b1] 'Sorry for putting a snake in your face' ... errrr....
    Finraziel
[a2][c2]   Kay pays so much attention to everything!!\nI'm gonna be super surprised if she doesn't actually figure out there's something fishy with the chosen undead prophecy by the time she gets the lord vessel   LuГ-s Fernando

[b1] nom nom nom nom nom   Chris Chong

[c3] wow, ive never seen that fat knight down there by the ball before!   LokiTetch

[c2] nice find on that fake wall but you've missed two bonfires behind fake walls in useful spots already   LokiTetch

[c2] 3 actually Popcorn897

[b2] The parry giveth, and the parry taketh away. Ralph Murphy

[c2][c4]   Titanite Demons are my favourite enemy in any Souls game. It's a real fight where one error can be the end. No parrying or backstabs possible, so it's pure melee (cheesing makes me sad), so the sense of achievement when slaying the Izalith TD (considering the strength and HP, coupled with location) was greater than most boss battles.   Steveypoos

[a5][d1]   these ragdoll physics are so stupid glad they fixed it in ds2   karpfenaut

[a5][d1]   +karpfenaut   And yet a lot of people were upset they were removed in DS2. SuperLotus

[b1] Zombie buttshot! Necrophiliacs rejoice! (Freaks...)Seven Day

[d6] Hello everyone, and welcome back to the Drinking Game of Kay Plays Dark Souls.B Kay starts this episode with a butt shot.B She then rightly assumes that the giant she just killed was the same one from the cut scene who opened the gate to Sen's Fortress.B What she didn't assume was that he was one of the few remaining of an enslaved race, forced by Sen to serve as a cog in devious contraptions.B \n\nOn a side note:B have you noticed that, in the 'souls' games, the giants always get crapped on?B I mean, they didn't even show up in Deamon's Soul, due to their teleport stone being smashed...B but the stone's destruction may have been for political reasons.B Also, I can mention this here because, at the time of this comment, Kay already played

Deamon's Soul and Dark Souls 2, so this isn't a spoiler.\n\nAnyway, Kay
finds a deathable ledge and is sorely tempted to hurl herself over, but
she holds back.B She manages to kill two titanite deamons and then
runs out of estus so goes to level up at the fire.B Then she tries to
take two deamons on at once, with predictable results.B After giving
up on the tar pit, Kay feeds the Onion Knight a snake man and then has
a chat.B She avoids the boulders to get the ninja-wizard gear set.B
Then Kay thought to run down the ramp after boulders were diverted,
opening up a hidden way.B \n\nBut then LOLOLOOLO!!1!!! You got
Mimiced!B And then kay got ripped into tiny pieces by the magical
chomping box from D&D.B That's a new rule.B Whenever Kay dies by
Mimic, drink... even if its already revealed to be a mimic, and kills
her with a roundhouse kick (which they like to do often).B I suspect
they were student's of Chuck Norris.B Drink six times. jack squatt

[b2] Everyone who ever played this game was waiting for the mimic.
     bonchbonch

[b1] +bonchbonch I'm so glad no one spoiled it. Been waiting 48 parts
for that very moment lol.   DW

[a1] Almost 50 episodes in... and I still find absolutely adorable how
she says treasure!   Colderslave

[b2] Ah, mimics :')   Cobalt059

[d4] Parry day 'Erry day   perkyoranges 2

[c1] surprised not one person told her by this point that almost all
weapons have two attacks that can combo for each light and heavy
attack, 1 hand and 2 handed\n   perkyoranges 2

[b1] Buttshot! Lyncei

[c1][c2]   I really hope she buys some better spells soon. I have no
idea why she's sitting here with soul arrow when great soul arrow and
heavy great soul arrow are available from the guy at firelink.
     Audiodump
[c4] To this day, I still have trouble with the same two Titanite
Demons.   Lanthirrhos

[c4] I seem to remember the second pair of Titanite Demons being
tougher than the first pair, as in having more health and doing more
damage. Probably why you had more trouble with them.   KSCIAA 0

[c2] Yes, they are stronger versions, I think there are three
versions. That second pair is medium tier, I believe.   Handtomouth
8991

[c3] insane. Never even knew about that secret in the beginning!B
     AgentOtaku83

[c7] I acknowledge that while she's not even halfway through the game,
plot-wise, the level of exploration she's done up till now lends more
sense to the current number of videos. \n\nStill, having played through
Dark Souls myself, I can't help but watch exploration-based episodes
like this and think, 'how the hell is this playthrough only 89 eps?'

\n\nMmmh, curious. Very curious. I can't wait to find out!
      the1One38

[b1] xD Love your laugh in the onion bro/snake part and also the mimic
part LOL.   abysswalker

[d3] +abysswalker   It would make a great animated GIF with the text
'Here, have a snake' or maybe 'Get snaKT, scrub'   SuperLotus

[d4] Right? me too xD abysswalker

[a5][d1][s1]   I'm really missing the zany ragdoll physics in the
sequel.   Kay Plays

[b1] Ending was so epic, couldnt stop laughing :D availableusername888

[a1][c4]   Thanks Kay, you inspired me. Finally I started my rerun with
two handed knight. It has been really fun =) Claymore for victory!
      Markus Saarinen

[c1] Hopefully you stop this parrying nonsense by the time you get to
Anor Londo :p   Thundernoob88

[c1] really? i know this is 2 yrs old but REALLY? just because you
cant parry shit doesnt mean its useless. its one of the most damaging
attacks in the game and by far one of the most satisfaying   Timotej
E aver

[c4] +Thundernoob88 i like it better than i liked the leaping/pouncing
thing from early game, and way better than the blighttown bootbusting.
all those nonlethal kicks... Good Morning

[c2] Sen's Funhouse, the greatest of houses.\n\nIt's where you're
forged into the paranoid neurotic killing machine you need to be for
the rest of the game. Terramagus

[c4] +Terramagus it's even more fun with invasions! at least when i
invade .... :3   Meista Lampe

[c1] FYI if you see a spell being sold by a merchant that you already
own, like heavy soul arrow for example, and buy it you can attune it
twice, so you could have 2 stacks of 12 Heavy Soul Arrow instead of 1
stack of Heavy and 1 stack of Standard. HerrHelmt

[b2] Amazing Chest Ahead!   Timothy Neilson

[b1] Making Siegmeyer eat the snake was some beautiful foreshadowing
to the end of the video   all ice

[s1] YES! Thank you! That was the guy's name.B I couldn't remember it
at all.   Kay Plays

[a1][a2][d2]   Really enjoying your play through of this game, you
seem to have the perfect attitude for Dark Souls, i tried watching
Day9's play through and holy christ i wanted to tear my hair out every
few seconds xD.\nCongrats on finding that secret wall :) FrostWolf

[s1] Thanks!B I'm happy to have you along for the ride. Kay Plays

[c1][c4]   That mimic is a pretty cruel joke if you don't have online messages enabled. There weren't any there for me, but I'd been smacking every chest up to that point anyways just because I noticed that 'mimic' was one of the nouns you could add into orange soapstone messages, haha. NZVargs

[a1] 'wow'\n\nPerfect way to end the video   NotECEC

[a1][c2]   Great video, Kay! B This isn't spoilery, just a friendly reminder. B The next time you find yourself flush with souls, remember that Griggs still has a lot to teach you about magic.   Jason Brown

[a1][a2]   Glad I finally caught up. B I was looking forward to seeing you do this area, partially because of the mimic. B Seeing you so casually collect every chest up to this point was like the build up to a great punchline.\n\nYou are doing really well, though. B Sen's Fortress typically gives players a rough time. B I didn't think I would ever see anyone willingly fight the demons at the bottom, though!
    Metalmattress4
[a1] This is going to sound weird, but it makes me happy when you pronounce each 'T' in 'Titanite.' Alexander Falone

[d3] Do we mean as opposed to 'Tie-un-ite'? Hrm. I find that then that I pronounce it either way. HitodamaKyrie

[a1] +Todd C I wouldn't change a thing Kay says, or the way she says it. Steveypoos

[d3] +Kay PlaysB Oh, don't listen to him. You pronounce the T's in 'Titanite' because THERE ARE T'S IN 'TITANITE.' Duh.   Todd C

[s1] +D Mayer\nPlease let me know when I pronounce something badly. I promise I won't take it personally! I grew up with heavy accents on both sides of my family, then swung the other way trying to be heard clearly, and still today am trying to shed some lingering speech quirks.   Kay Plays

[a3] Funny, I find it incredibly grating. B Different strokes I guess.B   Brashnir

[a1][a2][b2][d1] Finally caught up and subbed! Just wanted to say I've been really enjoying watching you play , it's making the wait for Dark Souls 2 that much easier.\nLove your meticulous nature, it kind of irks me when I watch someone run through a game just to see the ending, specially when it's a great game worth exploring.\nAnyway, keep at it, and can't wait to see more.\nAlso, mimics are assholes. mhbed5

[s1] Thanks so much, and welcome to the LP.B Comments like this totally make it worthwhile!B (Really, the game itself makes it worthwhile, in this case.B What an amazing game!) Kay Plays

[a2][b2][c4]   Oh that was totally worth the wait. The reaction that that first mimic is awesome every time! I was worried that Kay's careful style and being observant would overcome her lust for treasure, but thankfully it wasn't!\n\n(Don't worry, Kay, we all get eaten by that one the first time. It's Dark Souls reminding you that it hates you.) Carl Chisholm

[a2][c2]   Kay - you were on to something with the boulders and the hole with the ladder! Smart thinking! There's a LOT of secrets involving the boulders in here, including one you must ABSOLUTELY NOT MISS. B Be very thorough in here! B I know it's frustrating (I hate Sen's even more than Blighttown) but there's a lot to do here. David Batzer

[c1] throwing a lloyd's talisman at the man eating chest will put it back to sleep!   TheBloodseeker

[b2] Everyone's favorite part of a blind run, the mimic! Ty Sammut

[a1][b1]   I so hope 'It seems today is a good parry day' gets into the Dark Souls fandom lexicon. It is going to be in my lexicon anyway.\n\nThe end was just perfect...The only thing I was sorry that got spoiled for me.B \n\nCan't wait to see your revenge. Scott John Harrison

[a4] Is it just me or is the video a bit dark? If other people have this problem, could you possibly bump up either the ingame or the recording brightness a bit? It's a bit weird not being able to see things referred to in the video. kallemort

[s1] Hm.B I noticed when I was testing for the very first episode that the recording looks darker than the game, so I bumped up the game's brightness as high as possible.B Maybe there's some setting in the recording software that can bump it even more. Kay Plays

[c2] Yo, Kay, the Cobra-headed snakes are actually ladies! B I know it's weird as heck but I twinge a bit every time you call them hims.   RaeArtemi

[d4] +Jason BrownB Cannot un-see. Charlie Sloan

[c2] Yep. B If you look closely you can see their bumpy bits on the chest.   Jason Brown

[b2] Kay meets a mimic. Omnomnomnomnom. :)\n\nhttp://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moctezuma_I\n\n(I have no idea how to pronounce it.)mocthezuma

[d4] lol same with me Gnana Prakash

[c4] +QuantumButlerB The message I saw was 'Amazing trap ahead.' B Still got eaten.   Metalmattress4

[c2][c4]   +QuantumButler I didn't go into the game completely blind my first run, and knew there were mimics. I meticulously checked every chest I came across and when there were two or more compared them to try and spot the difference. None of them were ever mimics.\n\nThen I fell down the elevator in Sen's, saw a chest and didn't take my time examining it, and well...   mmiasmostati

[a5][c4]   Everyone gets eaten by the mimic. B It's mean how they don't use one until this late in the game. B I even had warning from my buddy that they existed but I'd gotten lazy about hitting chests by this point in the game.B   David Batzer

[c4] +QuantumButler Yep. This is true. Can confirm. I have been eaten by many a mimic. mocthezuma

[a2][b1]   *Almost dies to the arrow trap* 'Haha! Get arrowed-ed, snake!'
    Still about as perfect as that arrow trap can be handled B though.   RoadCrewWorker

[d4] I see you met your new best friend. He just wants hugs!B JbizCO

[a2][c2]   That second titanite demon you fought is actually just chilling and you can walk around him. He only attacks if you basically hug his chest.\n\nGood to err on the safe side though.   RoadCrewWorker

[c1] I'm sure someone has probably said this but, eating a humanity will heal you full. They're great to use if you run out of Estus. Cheers!   Stephen Williams

[a2] Sometimes you're too good at this game, lol\nI was really hoping you would take the lift into the spikes Mhippz

[b1] 'Looks like when you kill a giant, they're gone for good.'\n*Looks at remaining giant*\n'You didn't just hear that.'\n*nervous laugh*\n'We didn't say anything, don't worry!'\n\nXD   Nathan Hall

[b1] oh oh... oh oh... death   Carlos FerrГJo

[c4] Alright I swear some of these traps end up announcing themselves before Kay even gets there. That barrel throwing giant waited til I was center stage to drop fire on my ass but this giant just chucked one the moment she reached the ramparts for no reason. Dark Souls is sexist.
    uzumakiking

[c3] Sometimes I see you parry several times in a row and I think I should learn that... then other times I see you missing them all the time and I conclude it's still not worth it :P   Finraziel

[c1][c2]   It takes some practice and good timing, and some enemies and weapon swings are easier to time than others. You can parry with the target shield or buckler to get a larger parry window.   Jonathan Capps

[c5] Whenever I see a level design like this (replete with traps), it breaks the immersion. Who would spend the resources to build something like this, to live or work there? What purpose does it serve? Meh, not one of the more enjoyable nor interesting levels. IMO.   ubermoo

[c6] It's badly translated 'sen' means thousand in japanese. The original name of the place translates to 'fortress of a thousand traps' and it's designed to test if an undead is worthy of entering anor londo.   JohnPlayer381

[c6] It's been repurposed to find an undead worthy of entering anor londo.\nIt's all part of Gwyn/ Frampt and their regime's plan.\n\nFunny you should say that, ive known some assholes to say that most of the game is badly designed and this area is one of the few good ones.
    Blinge

[c1] That greedy ring is placed there for a reason :P   omnisemantic1

[b1] 13:20 Years later Kay would return to this spot to have a picnic lunch in Sen's Fortress.   The Was Bunny

[a2] So nonchalant when she found the bonfire. Most people, on their first run, would weep tears of joy (or bake a cake).   Steveypoos

[d4] 13:20 I did that once. Turned out the picnic ended up having a lot of ground beef and pancakes involved, thanks to some random serpent malcontent playing with the switches.   Niklas ThorΓ©n

[c7] I wonder if the reason they dont trigger pressure plates despite being so large might have something to do with the word hollow?
    Good Morning

[b2] Lol. He kills Kay then checks the walls for hidden doors :)
    WNxAigee

[d6] Hello again, and welcome back to the Drinking Game of Kay Plays Dark Souls.B In this episode, Kay smashes through walls and what-not.B Two walls broke down, in fact, and then a boulder to the face.B \n\nThen she murders a mimic and meets sombrero wizard.B After that she decides she should have a picnic in the path of a boulder, just for funsies.B After a time she finds another path quietly tucked away in some obscure corner, and then tosses herself off an edge to the beginning of the level.B Kay avoided the horrendous ceiling spikes in the elevator shaft.B Kay also discovered that the two pressure plates right next to each other have alternating fire rates.B I'm embarrassed I didn't notice that before.B \n\nNext Kay cheeses out the giant who tosses fire bombs.B Or maybe the giant just didn't care anymore and was resigned to death as a favorable alternative to chucking out firebombs at complete strangers, even after the master of the fortress had long since ceased to exist.B I always thought that was one of the saddest (and sometimes really creepy) movie tropes:B ancient machines/entities that keep functioning in a specific place/role even long after their purpose there has become meaningless and obsolete. B B \n\nBut then, holy crap, Kay found the hidden bonfire in Sen's Fortress, with no help in that matter.B Afterwards she... she flung poop at a centurion of the order of steel knights, and it *killed* him.B How would you feel if you went to all the trouble of becoming a knight, devoting your entire life to all the adventures and etiquette classes and slaying all the dragons that anyone could ever ask for, and then finally, while defending your fortress, someone threw a heap of scatt at you, causing you to catch dysentery and die from it.B If it was me, I'd feel pretty shitty.B \n\nSo then Kay got stabbed in the head after a controller malfunction, and the episode ended.B Drink 9 times for this episode.   jack squatt

[c2] You pondered the self-changing direction of the boulders; I know it's a very long time since your playthrough, but just in case you were wondering- the pressure plates that trigger the arrow traps are also designed to change the boulder's direction, so the boulders are always in the path of the ascending player.   InsignificantConnor

[c2] +InsignificantConnor That can't be true - the boulders change paths in the beginning of the video without Kay stepping on a plate in the meantime.   omnisemantic1

[c4] +InsignificantConnor WHAT!? I never thought about that and this is coming from a guy who beat the game 4 times   BESM1984

[b1] 2:06 LOLed so hard at that serpent soldier's death!!   Sandeep Kollipara

[a2][c3]   Did...did she just parry a rapier, those are like the hardest weapons to parry, and she did it on the FIRST TRY!\n\nMy skill level seems insignificant now...\n\nAnnd he got payback...fair enough, didn't even know he could parry you.   Handtomouth 8991

[c2] +Handtomouth 8991   Well, Ricard's Rapier hits multiple times so it's easier to parry (unless the first hit poise breaks you).   SuperLotus
[d1] 39:27 - I think one of Duke Nukem's lines pretty much sums this up. 'Eat shit and die.'   DryRoastedLemon

[b2] Death by Poo.... absolute perfection   AgentOtaku83

[a2] I love the stretch from Sen's Fortress to Anor Londo. The bosses, the visuals, everything. Especially after Blighttown, it's so refreshing despite how hard it is. Caiada2

[d5] Almost there!!! the1One38

[b1] 'I'll come back for you, but more importantly I'll come back for this loot', said the sorcery-build character to the all-powerful sorcery master. \n\nXD the1One38

[b1] 'I wanna fall on this guy so hard'\n\n-Kay being lewd, 2014   SiriusTexra

[c4] I've been hitting chests ever since the first mimic and you can probably guess what happened immediately after I stopped...   LukГЎ̆ЕЙ̆ Kucharczyk

[c2] Maybe you already know now, but mimic's chain are different from the chains of real chests :P Fernando Cavalcante

[c3] Wow. You're first person I've ever seen kill the giant that way. haha LAR Games

[c3] +LAR Games Same. I ain't even sure what is supposed to be happening there...   omnisemantic1

[b1] ROFL :'Once we kill giant he wont come back'..**giant eyeballing her in the background**   availableusername888

[b2] DidB that just happen ? Did you do a 180 turn right before the bonfire at the top of sen's fortress to go CHECK FOR SIEGMEYER'S NAME.\n\nI had no words when I saw that happen. nothing described it adequately.\ufeff Hulkeq2

[c5] Did you ever go back and get your souls after the boulder killed
you   Thundernoob88

[a2] 19:40 Why are you so amazing.anyone else would of just got on and
died straight. I have never seen such observant in my life. I love the
fact that the observance and cautiousness is offset by you almost
tunnel vision when it comes to 'treasure' lol. I could see the only
thing that would foil you was a treasure chest with teeth.
      Tuznecote

[d4] Haha, I love the idea of going to Sen's Fortress for a picnic :)
      Simon Abbott

[a1][c4]   Wanna know how I found the bonfire in Sen's? I was running
in a panic with tears streaming down my face, yelling 'OH GOD! OH GOD!
OH GOD!,' and took a leap of faith off the drop right before the giant
threw another firebomb. I mean, uh, I was methodical and observant like
you Kay. Haha!\n\nAlso, I saw the bloodstains on the elevator on my
first play through. I stayed on the elevator anyways. Died. I don't
know whatB I was expecting.B \n\nYour play through is veryB enjoyable
and I am trying to catch upB to the current video, but I thought I'd
stop and share some funnies from Sen's Funhouse. B Tony S

[b1][c1]   'Let's try dung! Let's throw poop at him!'\n\nYou are
somehow turning into a Dark Souls pvper while playing offline. Meckell

[d5] I'm the way you say loot sounds like lute :D no hate just
observation.   Viffel Godling

[c1] The attack delay is a known problem of all versions of the game
and happens usually when you attack when holding up the shield. The
attack won't go trough immediately, but will trigger the next time you
press L1/LB to bring up the shield.\n\nIf you notice your attack not
triggering, step back from the enemy you're fighting and release then
press the shield button so that it triggers the missed attack. Toiwat

[c1] Since you have the lightning spear I would suggest another weapon
to take up the normal path. Maybe that scythe. (so you have an Halbart
and a spear for shield hiding.   Scott John Harrison

[a5][c5]   Why do you still play this offline? B You're really missing
out on a major - and compelling - component of the game. Evan Williams

[a5][c6]   +Evan Williams I gather initially her other half set up the
game, and she had no clear idea whether she was logged in to something
and 'online' or not.\n\n\nI'm glad she played offline for her first
run, especially in an LP; all those messages on the floor reduce the
amount of individual player effort and thus reward (when someone
figures something out on their own). Also, all those 'jump
here/'illusory wall' messages are just utterly tiresome in Souls
games.\n\n\nSeeing her being invaded would've been fun, but player
summons for bosses just make NG bosses even more pitifully easy, so
that's another bonus for her staying offline for DS as she has no
option for those.GiRayne

[a2][c1][c2]   A couple of mechanics that may already have been
mentioned:\n\n- Poise/stagger works both ways, to enemies or to you.

B Big/heavy weapons, 2-handed and jump attacks do more poise damage than others, which is why you see the man-serpents stagger on one jump attack from your axe but poise through other one-handed swings in the beginning of this video. B You can factor this in when playing 2-handed/no-shield/grass-crest-on-back and use it to great effect.\n\n-The first 10 liquid humanity (in the top-left counter) increases item find, with the first one being the largest jump. B It's worth keeping one in there at all times just for that initial bump in drop rate. B The ring you found is even better but usually best kept for actual farming. B (I noticed you picked up 5 of your Green Titanite Shards from a single drop in an earlier video, but I won't spoil that kind of detail; anyways, farming is strictly unnecessary in this game unless you want a particular weapon for your build/run.)\n\nI always land up playing melee-only runs, so seeing your melee-heavy, but magic-based run is great fun.gitv1ld

[a1][a2][d1]   I caught up with your LP around 48 - thank you for a wonderful LP! B Your facility in intuiting the reason for/behind things is amazing - and a great testament to the game's world-building.\n\nIt's funny but true that a good blind LP is the only way to recapture the sense of wonder from the first run of the Souls games. B (You should look into Demon Souls if you have access to a PS3 - the atmosphere is even better, though the mechanics are less refined.)   gitv1ld

[c1] I find that the swing delay thing happens sometimes when trying to attack with your shield up.   NZVargs

[c3] hahaha wow i never knew about that bonfire in sens fortress   jvemPiRe14

[a2] I'm so glad you found Big Hat Logan, going for an int build he's pretty important. Would have been hard not to spoil anything had you left sens without him.B   hcram

[a1][c1][c2]   To your treasure chest problem, those things are termed 'mimics'. There is a couple ways to differentiate them from harmless chests and, in honor of your intuition, I'll merely suggest you examine a normal chest thoroughly at your next convenience. Secondly, if you find yourself unsure if a chest is a mimic or not and you don't wish to engage in a fight, just look at it for a good 30 seconds or so. MIMICS ARE IN YOUR FUTURE.\n\nAlso, I highly encourage you to explore areas you have cleared after having restored your humanity, and before defeating the area boss; you'll find some buddies willing to come to your aid, not that you need it.B (These, just for clarification, will be near bosses.)\n\nKeep it up, I've really enjoyed watching you play and seeing your first\nimpressions, it's amazing! Thank you for the quality content!Jean-Paul Satire

[d4] Once you let anything come between Kay and sweet alluring loot, the game has already won.   RoadCrewWorker

[d4] +RoadCrewWorkerB Damn, I've been discovered; it is so, Kay. Open your treasure chests with reckless abandon!B Jean-Paul Satire

[c2] This man is obviously lying, there'll never be any other mimic, and it's definitely not a reason to attack every treasure chest you find before opening it. That'd just be silly! RoadCrewWorker

[a2][c2][c3][c4] So it's really interesting that you found that blind spot for the firebomb giant. I didn't even know that existed, myself. It's generally quicker to just run through to him once you know what the layout of the upper portion of the fortress is, though, rather than whittling him down with arrows from afar. Also great job on finding the covetous gold serpent ring, the black sorcerer set/hush, the slumbering dragoncrest ring, and the secret bonfire. It took me forever to find all of those, and the black sorcerer set and dragoncrest ring I didn't find until my second playthrough and the help of the wiki.   Timothy Neilson

[c1][c2]   Siegmeyer of Catarina relocates once you turn the boulder into a safe position. (IE. out the window.)\n\nThe knight who drops the corpse containing the key out of the prison cell at the start of the game is called Oscar, Knight of Astora. He is the same knight who later gives you the Estus flask. You also get the Crest Shield from him by killing him when you return to Undead Asylum, after he has turned hollow and attacks you.\n\nCharacters that you have already encountered who come from astora include Andre the blacksmith, Solaire the sunlight warrior, Anastacia the firekeeper and Oscar the knight. mocthezuma

[c2] In regards to the boulder thing changing on its own, there are a couple of spots that trigger the changing. B If you listen carefully at 14:13 you can hear the sound of metal grinding, the same one as when you turn it!   RaeArtemi

[c3][c4]   I've seriously never actually used the dung. Now that I see what you did with it, I am starting to wonder why.B   JBizCO

[c3] One of those items that just sit there in your inventory and you never bother to try how effective it is lol :)   availableusername888

[a2][c4]   Well I can tell you how *I* found the spikes at the top of the elevator. Great job.   Stephen Williams

[c6] +Stevie RayB Nah, just hurts real bad. I've tested it (deliberately, of course).   thelol77

[c6] Instant crunch   Stephen Williams

[s1][c5]   Tee hee.B Does it kill you instantly, or just hurt real bad? Kay Plays

[c1] Yep, the covetous gold serpent ring is a worth-wearing one. It gives you 200 points to Item discovery (the maximum value is 410 and the base value is 100), so it's very useful when you go farming.   Dekanach

[a2][c4]   Took me about three playthroughs to find all those secrets in Sen's Funhouse, and you found them all. Pretty impressive.\n\nLooking forward to the next episode(s), should be some great stuff coming up. kallemort

[a2][c2]   YOU FOUND BIG HAT LOGAN!!!! i dont know if i could have kept quiet if you left sen's without finding him lol, he teaches all the best spells and you run into him on more than one occasion. cant believe you found almost all of sens secrets first time. my hat is off to you! p.s the guy in the beginnings name was oscar, this is Ricard, they just wear the same armor.   joe eaton

[a2] I'm stunned you figured out the elevator trap by watching the
friggin _chain_. Are you sherlock holmes?   RoadCrewWorker

[c3] +Michsters channel\nYeah, the bloodstains were what tipped me off
when I went through this area. Not so much the chain.   NZVargs

[c2] I guess you could say the bloodstains were a DEATH giveaway.
     Michsters channel

[a2][c2]   Nicely done Kay. Probably one of the lowest death count
first runs through the interior of Sens ever. Also good patience on the
firebomb throwing giant lol.\n\nThe boulder dropping giant does
respawn. He's the only respawning giant in the game I believe, so
unfortunately you'll have to run the boulder gauntlet again if you want
to go through the interior of Sens.   Nish S

[c2] The guy who gives you the key at the beginning is Oscar from
Astora, and yeah that armor is the Elite Knight Armor from Astora but
that's a different guy.\n\nAnd of course you find the secret bonfire
within 5 minutes of being on the roof! I don't think I found it till my
second charac.\n\nSince you're past the boulders thought I'd mention
you can hear them turning by themselves once you step past certain
parts. It makes the same grinding noise you hear when you turn it
yourself.   Ty Sammut

[a5] +RoadCrewWorkerB This is Dark Souls, observant people don't need
a pressure plate for EVERY trap.   Handtomouth 8991

[a5] I still wish the game had you stepping on trigger plates or
something to make that clearer instead of hidden trigger volumes,
even with the audio cue..   RoadCrewWorker

[b2] Thank god you found that bonfire. No more running through the
whole fortress againB yeshimxse

KinetikGTR's "Dark Souls" Let's Play (Blind Run) – Episodes 29, 30 & 31 – "Sen's Fortress"

[c2] Sens fortress is the proving ground you have to make it through to get to anor londo   Patrisha Harford

[d3] I find the name 'Sen's Fun-house' rather fitting.   Azure Templar

[c1] Garbage spear holding ya back.   King of the Rats

[c2] The demon that brings you to anor can bring you back.   King of the Rats

[c1][c4]   I ran through sens/anor lvl 5 to gank spank noobs with a +15 falchion. levels dont mean shit upgrades do. King of the Rats

[c1] he wasn't overleveled for this. If anything he was underleveled, since he barely upgraded his weapons at all, which really makes the most difference at this point.   Freedom Panic

[b1] I heard this was a fun game, and I see why 13:42   54Drp

[d5] How to use magic?Uros Stanojlovic

[c4] lol your pretty high lvl compare to me in my first playthrough i was like level 42 when i beat the game hahaha Renn

[c4] and it was challenging because I wasn't using a spear   1128nesecret

[c1] but all stats give you bonuses in defense and stuff like that for a great while I would say you are over leveled it doesn't matter what stat is but ur still over leveled I was level 22 at sens fortress and it was fine 1128nesecret

[c1] Oh, and the stability rating of your shield also impacts how much your endurance bar gets depleted from blocking. Improving a shield w/ good physical/mag/fire damage reduction to have higher stability helps a ton.   Scott Clarkson

[c1] Poise is the hidden third pillar of the endurance/vitality balance. If you have high poise you will take less of an endurance hit from blocking enemy attacks which makes your endurance even more useful/easy to keep from being depleted. Basically I'd recommend focusing on endurance from here on out if you want to keep using a shield. High vitality really only is better if you're going no shield/2 handed weapon or dual wielding.   Scott Clarkson

[c1] Some may disagree but I think you really should pick one of vitality or endurance to max out (I always go w/ endurance) and stop paying points into both. I think of endurance like the regenerating shield from Halo or Mass Effect. It automatically replenishes and is as good as hp when you block correctly. I am about to beat new game plus w/ 12 vitality/40 endurance (starting for thief class I believe). You save points for the damage scaling stats like dex/str/int/faith this way. Scott Clarkson

[s1] I did. And I'll go back sometime. KineticGTR

[b1] Haha, an epic cliffhanger. Will he make it or die trying? ^.^
     Blitz King
[a5] Only on console, the PC version came out fully patched and hasn't
been updated since then.   Gabriel

[c1] When you're almost done with sen's fortress i recommend you to
upgrade your weapons to +10 before going further, or you're going to
regret. At this moment you're doing very low damage.   SKErwin2

[c1] The sad part is that you HAVE to complete sen's fortress before
you go anywhere else otherwise you will hit impassable fog gates that
will just block your progress.   EGH666

[d4] Kinetic, did you read the other top rated comment in your
previous video(which was mine)? :P sev X one

[s1] This is a very good analysis and exactly how I felt about it as
well. Thanks   KineticGTR

[d4] welcome to the fortress of despair!   ferricry

[a5] If only mmorgs could be more like this, although the ending is
somewhat rushed and the dlc broke the immersion for me and somewhat
spoilt the game. Whatever4690

[c1] lol thats only the beginning hopefully you can get through it and
I hope you have some lloyds talismans handy youll find out what they
are used for^^   angelicdragon

[c1] Average soul levels vary greatly from person to person in this
game. The patient die less and get back to there blood stains more
often then the ones who rush and thus end up having a higher level. I
say as long as you don't spend too much time farming for souls whatever
your level happens to be is exactly what you deserve.   RynKen

[c1] Power within doesn't just affect your Pyromancy, it affects your
attacks in general. Quite a big increase in damage too :)Ryan Martin

[b1] 13:47 damn\n   Patrick Foster

[a3] Being a little bitch gets you killed in Sen's Funhouse. Man up
and run through. Satirizer

[c1] (continued) Basically it evens out because your equipment isn't
very high level except for the pyro flame which you don't use
primarily. Each level adds a bit to your defense, but barely. In some
cases being your level gives you an advantage, and in some cases it
doesn't. However, the fact that it doesn't make much of a difference
also means that you'll rarely be under-leveled for pretty much any
area. If you have a +10 weapon at least, you're ready for end-game. But
play how you want to! ZeShroom

[c1] As far as being over-leveled is concerned, here's my opinion:
You're entering Sen's fortress at level 53. Someone who isn't used to
Souls games and doesn't spend as much time exploring/grinding would
likely enter Sen's at around level 33, having spent levels on skills
that don't really matter as much, like you did. I would expect someone
who is comfortable with the game to be in the same situation but at 43.

Your pyromancy flame is very high level though, but you barely use it.
(to be continued)ZeShroom
[c2] You need to go to the catacombs to kindle further Kinetic.
        nsboy123

[c1] every point you put into a stat like say attunement or
intelligence or faith also gives you +to all defenses which matters a
lot. sev X one
[c2] You couldn't kindle the bonfire cuss it already is kindled to
begin with. sev X one

[d4] yeah your right, i had it in my head that it was the firelink
keepers soul he used at the beginning. totally forgot about the orb.
        TrainedOldSkool

[c2] 10:50 just kill them with the trapVollieTV

[c1] how high your level is only really matters for summoning/ pvp.
say for example you need help with a boss later on, you'll struggle to
see many summon signs in that area if you're over-levelled. and for pvp
matchmaking people tend to max out at sl 100 or 120.   andy388

[c1] lol kinetic u lucky u got that end game black knight shield it
has great stability without even upgrading it. otherwise u would have
went flying off cliffs ages ago with the amount of hits you've been
blocking with a normal shield, a normal shield plus 10 or 12 comes
close to it :) JasonVsThe13th1983

[c1][s2]   SPOILER ALERT\n\ndude you can get LautrecBr's armor and ring
if you invade him further in the game, not to mention you also get the
fire keeper soul that can revive the Fire keeper again, so i have no
idea what you are talking about.\nDHellH

[c1] You need to go through Sen's Fortress to progress through the
game. Good luck SpArTaNOmEgA29

[d4] Yeah watch the video for a little bit youll get your commentary
        Gunthix49

[d3] well nevermind that, dumb me Sander

[d3] no commentary? or am i missing something that happened? Sander

[c1] you can aim with all long ranged wepons but i can remember the
button sorry XD Sean Bartlett

[c1] There is a little trick where you can snipe with a crossbow. Just
look with your binoculars at the point you want to shot. Then equip
your crossbow and you will always hit the same spot until you move.
        Otzi Elegiac

[d5] The normal procent is 1%, you will die almost perfectly then has
it does 101 ticks. Fully upgraded its 2.3%. Look at forums. But then
again they may have patched that, idk. impacarnage

[c1] ur lvl might be high but u need better weapons i would say up ur
stranght so u can 2 hand the dragon axe or find something better
        SeedCode

[d4] I don't think you've beaten the full game yet.   Mike Shepard

[c2] Sen fortessBr's boss weakness are his legs. If you keep hitting
the same leg he will after a while become stunned aaaand if you keep
hitting that leg again he will fall on his ass. Just remember to look
out for his empty hand has he can grab you and throw you of the boss
area.   impacarnage

[d5] Live streaming HAS been huge! 'Pink Nation!' Punk Hazard

[d4] Think about this one more time. I thought the same thing at
first, but then I realized some important detail. Otzi Elegiac

[c1] The more upgraded your Pyromancy Flame is the more life power
within will take from you.   impacarnage

[c1] Kinetic, your weapon seems too weak. You might end up having a
bad time in Anor Londo. But it will be fun, I suppose. :3Anonymouz00

[b2] Next part, there will be some serious rushing.   Taizen Gaming

[a1] Nice u back!!! Anor lando we go :D. \n M Santos

[b2] Finally!   Daniel

[a1] Lol ihavent seen ur vids in a whileforgot how fun they were!
     lullaby963

[b2][c2]   Kinetic don't forget that you can use Sen's Fortress traps
in your favor!! I can't wait till you get to Anor Londo!
     TheEternalMercy

[b2] I thought you quit! XD Jill Valentine

[b2] 'ell yea.   venxten

[a3] You're so timid it's really frustrating   fred young

[d4] +Pand Santhi Exactly this. People often forget that they are
viewing playthroughs as veterans to the game and very, *very easily*
forget that they played in the very same way at the start.   Azure
Templar

[d4] +MoreSalt Pls well, but didn't we all look for bonfires the first
time we played? Pand Santhi

[c4][d4]   I can understand that but we have to remember that we are
viewing this playthrough as veterans -- Kinetic is as of yet at this
episode relatively new to the game. On one's first playthrough, every
little setback feels rough. Azure Templar

[a3] +AzureTemplarB 1 souls level doesn't really matter too much in
the game. and if he is going to spend his time cautiously searching for
one, i B don't want to watch half an episode of him doing that MoreSalt
Pls
[c4] +MoreSalt Pls Well, I know I'd rather spend time cautiously
searching for bonfire than lose potentially a soul level to rushing

about. To be fair, it's really not a huge thing to farm those souls back but psychologically it can really set you to a bad mood. Azure Templar

[d1] the mimic isn't beetlejuice shit, its DQM shit I think, though the ones im thinking of don't have a body attached to the chest...
    Stephen Taylor

[b2] Man you cringe whenever he is so close to discovering a secret and then just BARELY misses it. Damn. It's not super important, it is just cool to see what he discovers and what he doesn't. Freedom Panic

[c7]] If you were on average level pretty sure the mimic would kill you, which probably was the reason for it being there haha, btw, agreed on the Beetlejuice reference, exactly the same thoughts. JarekMasta

[d1] Hey Kinetic, ever thought of Doing a DragonBr's dogma gameplay? :D
    TheEternalMercy

[c2] OR he can just attack every chest he comes into! :D
    TheEternalMercy
[d4] That works too, you can never be to careful I suppose :p
    fRostPEST
[b1] look at that face 4:59\n   Patrick Foster

[c3] I thought the mimic chest were instant death once you open them...   TYKU20

[c2] HINT: Rolling Boulders cannot only crush you but can crush other things too, Happy Exploring :D   Shadower1337

[c2] or just hit every damn chest you see just incase   nsboy123

[b1] 'Aw hell no!' - Hahaha, I was waiting for this reaction to chests ever since the beginning.   Vokoca

[c6] Thats wrong. Its 80% or 90% The Mad Jack

[c2] zack, there is a fire....but not every zone will have one.......there will be times where you will just have to fight the boss before you get a fire! EPIC MISADVENTURE

[d4] Guys no spoilers on anor londo :D M Santos

[c1] lose the winged spear. Clay is so OP use it. if u want spears go the lighting one. imba dmg   M Santos

[c1] Kinetic!!! u can block and attack at the same time when using a spear!!!   RPGTimaeus

[c1] Lightning spear is way better than winged spear. Try back stabbing with your claymore. It's not any harder to do and does more damage than winged spear.   Satirizer

[b1] Mimic RO... Mimic 8:05 ShizouD

[b1] also, BLACK IRON TARKUS!!!! HostileViaVida 'K

[c1] Kinetic to fend off the future projectiles use the force miracle. READ or u might just die in the next episode. HostileViaVida 'K

[c2] You can tell whether a chest is a Mimic or not by it's chain, is the end of the chain is facing away from you it's a standard chest and if the end of the chain is facing towards you it's a Mimic. fRostPEST

[c2][s2] Look over the edge of a small broken wall 1 or 2 staircases above you where you left off in this ep. bonfire CthulhuMidianDawm

[c1] Use the Lightning Spear against the 'snakemen'. Fabio Rosolen

[c2] I dont think you will find the bonfire in sens fortress unless you play online and read a message on the ground, its very well hidden sev X one

[c2] That room you walked in is the only room that makes them start moving by themselves again, any other way you would of been fine. Jill Valentine

[d4] If you are looking a Bonfire 'You're gonna have a badddd day!!!!!' fraitheart22

[c1] Look at the Lightning Spear's stats. And try throwing a Lloyd's Talisman at an attacking mimic for funny result. Dorkopolis

[c2] If you watch a treasure chest closely, you can tell if it is a mimic (you saw it breathing earlier). And you can just attack every chest; just to be extra cautious. MerchantGhost

[b2] Well, I'm glad that you went up because it is the right of way. Taizen Gaming

[c5] anyone know why the boulder reset itself? because he went back?\n Andreas LidstrΓ¶m

[c2] Try exploring those falls where you thought an elevator would come by later, because there isn't another elevator. Jill Valentine

[c6] Yes, the boulder does open up different paths to items you couldn't get before. Jill Valentine

[c1] Lol you may never know if it's a mimic or a chest XD you should check out that lightning spear. Ji hoon Kang

[d2] I really think you should read about where the Bonfire is, I have a feeling you'll never find it. Xevrez

[b2] Yeees!!! More Dark Souls!!! YEEESS!!! xD GrsnDark

[b1] Lol at the end Matty Insane

[b2] DOUBLE YES! I've been waiting for the mimic! MerchantGhost

[c1] You never equipped the Lightning Spear. ngu0061

[b2] YES! Auron: Instituto Gamers

[a3] I swear some people are just serious idiots. Just plain idiots.
Cant you just shut the hell up and enjoy the the damn video? If not
dont watch it and get lost. itami uchiha
[b2] The anticipation is killing me for the next episode!
     TheMystic
[a4] Im in the excact same position your in branfreeze :P marathoned
the playlist, only to be like 'why is he not posting anymore?' reading
these comments telling me why :(i'll be looking forward to you
starting to upload again kinetic! :) Im quite sure, there's more people
like me, who enjoy the playthrough, but who does not comment :) so just
because it may seem overwhelming with negativity, im quite sure there
are alot of people enjoying it ALOT as well :) keep up the good work
kinetic!   Frischhenriksen

[c4] I just made it past the iron golem kinetic your in for some ass
beatings after that!   TheMystic

[s1] I will return and upload again more Dark Souls. I just need some
time away to have fun with videos of other games. Then I'll return here
for more torture from you guys :P KineticGTR

[a1] im a huge fan kinetic, the reason I like/love your videos of ds
is because ur that guy I would point to my friends saying that's how
you figure out dark souls.It really sucks that you wont be uploading
but I can completely understand your position.   Echi

[b2] I was hoping you'll get to Anor Londo and the boss battle there,
very excited about that, I guess I'll never see that happen again. T_T
     sinnad07

[a1][d1]   No more FF or Pokemon etc. games. It's Dark Souls time! You
inspired me to buy this game and I just finished it. Feeling pretty
good now, don't quit man.   Kronos

[a1] Well that makes me very sad :(. I really like your walktroughs...
the fact is that i am bored of playing dark souls and yet i gladly see
you playing it for the 1st time. The mistakes that u do in the game,
the expressions when u enconter npcs and bosses remindes me of when it
was me :D. I do really love this series. Dont give up on us kinetic!!!
I hope to see u soon in Anor Londo :D. I hope u play the game till the
end because u wont regret it!   M Santos

[a1] Sorry to hear about all the D-bagz in the community. Im glad I
don't get involved in online communities. Really enjoying your play
through and hope too see more. Ill start watching other videos to
support but I bet the apocalypse gets here before all the haters shut
their mouths. TY and GL   Crimson Ninroot

[a1] I support you Kinetic do what you want to do. Thats what video
games are about! I recently started playing Dark Souls and been having
a blast. Iv also been looking at other peoples vids more for direction
since this game only gives vague hits. But even watching the other
videos Im surprised by some of the elitist comments on how people
should play Dark Souls. Its no wonder to me if you want to take a
break.   UnAnimatedMan

[a4] Post next plz :(its taking longtime... M Santos

[a2] Kinetic i cant believe this is your first time playing dark souls, u are just naturally good at video games i guess :) i love this shit ur doin   ZimZombi

[c2][s2]   Tip: you need to fall off the edge near the place where the big guy throws the fire pot, like somewhere close to the place when you first saw the fire at. Heisenberg101

[b2] Oh man, I hope you haven't been spending the last several days getting demoralized by Anor Londo....it happens to all of us :) Looking forward to the next video!   Scott Clarkson

[d3] Kinetic vs Kenan and Kel is nearing, canBrt wait! XD   TheEternalMercy

[c1] be human to summon people\n THE HIVE

[a1][b1]   awesome vid I felt so bad when ricard stabbed you :(1128nesecret

[c1][b2]   You missed the bonfire and the shortcut. And you should try the lightning spear, btw - it's pretty good. Tykain256

[d1] Hey, kinetic, does the movement in dark souls 2 felt heavy to you? It felt kind of heavy to me, when I see the demo live   Yong Sen

[c5] What happened to your bloodstain when you died that first time?   Bisquick Quick

[a1][c4]   Man, this is so fun to watch! I had to watch a walkthrough myself to find the bonfire in Sen's Fortress, so it's not just you, Kinetic. It's pretty well-hidden. MerchantGhost

[a1] Welcome to the Dark Souls community! People criticize everything everyone does here. (most of the time) Love your videos, keep it up, Kinetic! :D Moonlit Artemis

[c2][s2]   You should try out the lighting spear and the bobfire is around were the guy was throwing oil bombs   GenjyoSan

[a1][b2]   You're doing a great job! Don't let any trolls/snobs tell you otherwise! I don't really have anything to add to the various bits of constructive advice that's been given out here, so I'll just say this: you are doing a much better job playing Dark Souls blind than countless other YouTube gamers doing it with guides. I really look forward to seeing you get into the next immediate area of the game, an area I and many others consider to be the most exciting in the game (especially the boss fight)! brightsuperstition

[d3] Theres a bonfire after that boss :D You were soo close. David Auditore

[d4] It's 'Riposte' not 'Ripostle'. Not judging just saying.   Satirizer
[a1][c2][s2]   It's your videos so you should play how you will like! Don't let others tell you how to play and keep on pushing forward! Oh

yeah you also skip the bonfire, if you see a small wall that is broken, at around the 1:31 mark on the bottom is a bonfire. fifa405

[c1] Jumping R2 attack FTW vs. jerks like Ricard that attempt parry/riposte tactics. Crush their defense before they can set it up. Boosting your endurance at this point would have huge benefits for your build. It would help with blocking more effectively w/o getting stunned and also give you more swings of your weapon before depleting the bar (quicker kills). Upgrading your weapons will do more for damage increasing than upgrading STR/DEX at this point. Thanks for posting these videos.   Scott Clarkson

[c2] tips. \n1. the cages you walked past at 15:10, get in the one with the open door to open up a shortcut. \n2.I'd also recommend hitting treasure chests before you open them from now on to save yourself occasional grief.\n\nenjoying these! andy388

[a1] I will be honest, I don't have the gaming skill to play this game but this is easily one of the most interesting game ever. Thanks for the vids as now I know what my friends are talking about.LancerJak

[d4] Yeah. He's kinetic, not you! Yong Sen

[a2][a3]   bro, get off his dick and let him play how he wants. hes doin fine for his first play through. better than a lot of first play throughs ive seen actually. kinetic dont listen to people that tell you youre playin the game wrong. Souls games are about you experiencing things your way, not other peoples.   Dank Morning Wood

[b1] ricard that fucker   Dank Morning Wood

[c1] can't really tell because you have full armor on, but you have to be in human form to find summons signs. deviantwraith

[c1][c2]   Be sure to thoroughly explore the upper area to find useful items and a *cough* bonfire *cough*, and something that you briefly interacted with earlier in your visit can lead you to some large headwear...\n\nOh, and like others are saying, upgrade weapons, maybe try lightning spear if you want, and go human to find a powerful npc summon near the boss. TheAnubisCycle

[c2] Against those juggernaut size bosses, please 2 hand or you will get crushed, blocking will get you killed.   Maurice Kelly

[c1] U can't summon when u are hollow only summon when u r human   Tim Y

[c2] He can buy them in Anor Londo and not waste his time backtracking to Depths. He will get past Sen's boss in no time without upgrading.   CthulhuMidianDawm

[c1] Get a new weapon recommened for me is the uchitangana dont care if i spelled it wrong and upgrade it all the way make the snake guys and anor londo easier Artorias_Abysswalker77

[c5] Hey Kinetic. Using pyromancy feels good, huh? Taizen Gaming

[c1] that claymore & winged spear has to become +10 by now kinetic, trust me u don't wanna cry a little later in the game. if u ain't got enough large shards u can farm them from the slimes in blighttown.
      JasonVsThe13th1983

[c1] you need humanity for npc summons\n   Sean Bartlett

[c2] Be wary of the chains on the chests. Wink Wink   Mike Shepard

[d1] You guys saw the Dark souls 2 beta registration?   Hayatofal

[c1] 19:21 'I don't see any summon signs...' - the dead man said. Restore your humanity...

[c2] now that you know about mimics, you should just hit every box you encounter :)   Jonathan

[d2][s2]   Sorry for the form but you'shit' tube dont allows me the entire link, search in youtube 'Dark Souls -Sen's Fortress - How to Get to Bonfire and First Boss' the first link..your welcome. fraitheart22

[d2][s2]   (/watch?v=lRPGtD1lYBQ) Kinetic Bro, 'THE BONFIRE' is here:
      fraitheart22

[c1] Kinetic if you go in HUMAN FORM you can Summon 'Tarkus' for the Boss fight in the tower next where you read the messages.
      fraitheart22

[c1] Try the lightning spear!!! Jill Valentine

[b2][d2]   You did miss an easy bonfire. But it's quite well hidden. You will have to look it up on a wiki i think.   sev X one

[c1] You only see summon signs when you're human. sev X one

[b2][c2]   you missed the bonfire. but if you donBʳt find it try the shortcut that you found.....'   WhiteGemini

[c1][c2]   Tip 1) Your Lightning spear is the equivalent of a +5 normal spear with lightning damage. Elemental damage comes in handy against heavily armoured foes as it can bypass shields.\nTip 2) Now that the flame pot guy is dead, try exploring some previously dangerous areas & read soap messages for clues to help you find the bonfire.\nTip 3) The beams you've been talking about won't take you where you would like them to. Caution is advised. Vith Nix

[b2] watching this walkthrough is painful for all the things that he's missing   unritardatoqualsiasi

[c2][s2]   the bonfire is on a drop of the broken wall of the second platform where the firebomb giant was throwing them, and the Shortcut ahead message is right in front of a cage, no ideas?   Kitsu Diogo

[d2] You should look up the bonfire and the shortcut as well. You put your time in the fortress and no one can fault you. Good luck. peterpez

[c2] Jump across and get the key to upen that shortcut. Jill Valentine

[c2][s2]   There is a bonfire right when u encontered the fire balls
for the 1st time, Just jump down near a broken wall. In the room where
u read the message master u can summon a phamtom to\ufeff help u with
the boss (u just cant be hollow :D) if u like. After that u going to
Anor Londo and finally my joy will begin :D. GL kinetic M Santos

[b1] tarkus!!   James Spence

[b2] you avoided the bonfire you had to see that message\n
      unritardatoqualsiasi

[d5] Umbasa!!!! fraitheart22

[b2] Woke up to some Dark Souls.. The lord is good! Praise the Sun! *
      Punk Hazard

Masterkizz' "Dark Souls" Let's Play (Blind Run) – Episodes 30, 31 & 32 – "Sen's Fortress"

[a1][c4]   love comingB backB watching this again, I started playing
same time as masterkizz and learning along with the videos. great
funB :)   Michael Reaney

[c2] Quick Tip on the 1st Electrical Cobra on the bridge... just
before you run across underneath past the 4 swinging blades, simply
pull out a bow. With each arrow, the Cobra Dude will get pushed closer
and closer to the edge. About 6-7 arrows will push him to his death.
While you're in the same position, swing your aim to the Snake Dude in
front of you and shoot him, drawing to you. 9 times out of 10, he will
get hit by a blade and get knocked to the tar floor below. If you stay
there, he will climb the tall ladder back to come get you so decide:
flight or fight. James Gowan

[b2] They call it Sen's Funhouse for a reason. So much fun in this
episode!   RazalasTrebla

[c1] You do know that you won't be able to invade anyone, right?
      Flee4me

[d4] cool ok ill look him up   Edens EndTime

[d4] lol imma boss   Edens EndTime

[d4] PVP... at level 711? Wut?   Flee4me

[c1] Homeward Bones are one of the most useful items in the game check
them out. Truedag101

[d2] watch a guy name jblackmel.. he only does dark souls pvp PSNadam

[d4] well shit then fuck   Edens EndTime

[c1] most pvp is done between 75-125. PSNadam

[c4] im still so proud of my character and i got bragging rights i got
my guy to lvl 711 yesterday im so proud time to pvp Edens EndTime

[a1] Masterkizz you brought a smile to my face, tremendous fun
watching you play.   rurimino

[c3] Whaaaat? After who knows how many playthroughs, I've never known
about that Illusory wall/ shortcut you found after fighting the
Titanite Demon...damn, this game never ceases to surprise.   shiva369

[c1] 0:49 best light armor in the game imo   Jorp theNarwhal

[d1] He said he covered everything in Borderlands he wanted to cover
and the work he had to put in wasn't worth it.   Saturos09

[b1] 'This is no laughing matter, I tell you' *continues doing the
shield thing*   toosecret2no

[d2] Watch his video. Just scroll down on his upload's! XNightmareLPX

[d1] yeah i am but i liked kizz' videos on borderlands 2 why did he stop Matthew Paraskevas

[a1] you good sir just earned a subscription :)\n MegaCharlie98

[d4] by the way, love the last name   Arkantoscream's Channel

[d5] And then, mid power attack, he gets stun locked   Arkantoscream's Channel

[d4] I guarantee you'll have fun with it.   Slipskin

[c1] You should level to use the BKGS. It's strong attacks can be devastating if you time them right (very slow swing start), and can actually fling enemies around.   Slipskin

[a1] Why do people try and tell you how to play YOUR game. That always annoys me about youtube. Good video mate, keep them coming.   tobinblade
[d2] As far as I know, he wont. :C But you can watch yoteslaya's LP of Krieg!   XNightmareLPX

[c6] ZweihΓ¤nder ^^   XNightmareLPX

[c1] Use whichever weapon you like, the battle axe wont stop you from completing the game   neztkeres

[c2] You didn't mention anything about it in the video - but did you notice that you can no longer use the bonfire at Firelink Shrine?\n\nThe Black-eye Orb is part of a 'side-quest' of sorts to restore it.   cynicalsaint

[c1] Really at the end of the day the most important thing about a weapon is its move-set. Higher damage weapons will usually swing slower and consume more stamina per swing - so at the end of the day all that stuff kind of balances out. \n\nSo as long as you keep a weapon that your comfortable using upgraded you'll be fine. \n\nThat said it might be worthwhile to spend a little time swinging around your other weapons at a bonfire just to check them out. If you find one you like - consider upgrading   cynicalsaint

[d1] Hey masterkizz could u do a borderlands kreig lets play Matthew Paraskevas

[a2][a5][c5]   I've been watching this and then had to go out and buy this game and find time to play it, but I got it on PS3. On mind it has been saying 'You Recovered' and 'You Defeated' (never had a name) when recovering souls and killing bosses instead of 'Retrieval' and 'Victory Achieved'. Is that a PC difference, or part of a mod, or something with the DLC included with the PC version? And it seems a bit harder on PS3, but I figured that was just Masterkizz being good and making this look easy. IconoclastXVII

[c1] Use the zwhender or however you spell it its a good swordIzaac Bogan

[a4] You shoud make a own episode to The thing you do when you talk to people. The shield thing.   NightGasher1

[d5] HOLY SHIT   Sherman Lee

[c1][c4][d2]   Kizz, you can watch people beat this game in 1 hour, and killing every boss while doing so on YouTube. My first run was 3 days, my second run was 6 hours, also your axe will do just fine if you keep upgrading it.   Shaan A

[d3] Nope, Morgan Freeman = American Masterkizz   TraceRTaco

[d1] Kizz do what you think is best for the channel you don't have to do borderlands 2 do what you want true subscribers will stay a subscriber Dylan Bernier

[c4] yup, lvl 60 here, enchanted axe still by my side!   Dokter Sonbiru

    he alreasy said hes playing the next dlc then hes prob done\r\n kotzer71

[c6] great sycthe\r\n kotzer71

[c1] with out dex arrows are not going to help unless your just trying to agro bad guys kotzer71

[b1] I laughed soooo hard at the part where he falls   Khaled Jan

[c1] Just for the lulz wield that zwei and pancake enemies with it ;D
    Bitmap Frogs

[d4] Quit asking..   CrunchTheory в"‹

[d3] oh, but attacking an NPC with the power of Kenshiro is not screwing around. Bobby Brown

[c1] In situations like this it might be a good idea to use a homeward bone. Eli Kessler

[d1] please play borderlands!   FootyBal

[c1] Hey kizz you should try using the uchigatana , get up to 40 dex the weapon becomes beastly ! sportysausage

[d4] Hi   david jimenez

[a1][d1]   This series is cool but do you think you will ever play BL2 again?   Ben Dagg

[a2] Kizz, use whatever weapon you wanna use mate, your doing great with that axe.   Kaethorin

[c2][s2]   Dude u forgot something back in the fire link shrine .the bells unlock a new npc that gives u a quest thing. it's on the way to the grave yard. spoiler alert for all people .   Julian Morris

[a1] This lets plays is seriously good, its your reaction that really intrigues me.\nAwesome Masterkizz, without a doubt 1 of the most entertaining and unique channnels ive watched keep it up sir :)
    iceman9560

[d1] Im not sure why but watching this makes me wanna load up skyrim and raid some caves   Brigham Bush

[b1] Numb reaction times? Wut?   bagelsliveinmyleg

[c1] And uhh, gross. I hate the wolf ring. You shouldn't wear it because it will numb your reaction times because you won't need to role as much.   Rem Bloodlock

[c1] The axe you are using is actually really good. All the weapons are good, except maybe the caestus or w/e it's called. The first time I played the game I beat it using my +5 raw Reinforced Club. Every weapon is good.   Rem Bloodlock

[d4] Ah, good plan. I shall look forward to it!   OnyxZephyr333

[c1] If you want a really good new weapon, farm the man-serpents for one of their swords, though it is a pretty rare drop. It's a beast of a sword both one handed and two handed. Biiiru

[a1] I love you, you sexy mother fucking shrimp on the barbie man you   Rob Miller

[d4] Boo   IOutDoSyndicate

[c1] When you mentioned plunge attacking an enemy, you said you might survive with enough health. Fall damage is actually percentage based in this game. Perhaps there is a way that can help mitigate that damage.. =D   moogigasaurus

[a1][b2]   Another excellent episode, watching you find the traps is freaking me out though. It makes me want to shout at the TV to warn you. Madfall

[d3] Dark souls drinking game????????? Callum Riley

[c5] When did you get the wolf ring? I'm pretty sure we didn't see that in an episode.   Prologic1videos

[c4] Really? I'm 50 hours into the game and about to beath the last of the 4 lords. Didn't need magic or pyromancy a single time.   martynoob

[d4] The axe isn't cutting (wink wink) it anymore looks like.   monpekokero

[a4] Make the Black Eye Oeb a special episode.   monpekokero

[a1][c2]   Man, I am loving this series. It's great just listening to you play and your reactions to things.\n\nI've never played this game, so I'm certainly no expert, but it seems to have tons of paths you can go at any one time. Do you have a checklist of places to go still? The blacksmith you're near sells a crest, which I'm pretty sure opens a door in the forest place. (Sorry if that's a spoiler, but I figured it from the videos). Might be a place to check out.\n\nKeep 'em coming, MK! OnyxZephyr333

[c1] GET IRON FLESHHHHHHH!!!! YOU WILL NEED IT\n   PakNova

[c4] as another who has trudged through dark souls. i must remind
you.. always always pick up poison arrows... aurwyn

[c1] Use a different weapon plz!! HEYMANGRAMPS

[a1][b1][b2]   haha YES! Most exciting episode yet, sens fortress is
just such a brutal(y fun?) place! Too funny when you fell down Bobby
Brown

[d4] Nah, that's just preference. Lucas

[d4] Early morning eyynickrod32

[a1][d1]   I really cannot believe how much I am enjoying these videos.
Probably will never actually play this game, but to listen to
Masterkizz's obvious enjoyment and real reactions makes these a
pleasure to watch. I loved your BL2 video's, but I am really enjoying
these so much so I just keep checking to see if the next one is up
every few minutes..lol Jim Casey

[c2] I love watching you play, but you really should start paying more
attention to dialogue. In Dark Souls there is no such thing as useless
chitchat - every sentence means something, and every character has a
motive. So by screwing around and not paying attention during dialogue
you really do miss out on stuff :)steaktastebetterpill

[a1] Yay! Daily episodes! I haven't watched a show on a regular basis
as soon as episodes come out in a decade.   Pig0Benis88

[c1] Hey Mk the battle axe you have will allow you to get through the
game. Its not the best weapon but it is definately viable. Also the
reason you cant wield the BK Greatsword is because your dex is too low.
You always need to meet the Dex requirements for weapons but you get a
50% bonus to str when you two hand a weapon so 20 str would become 30
when two handed. Keep up the good work. Darktonberry

[c2] Masterkizz the undead merchant has a katana that is the best
weapon in the game pretty much if you level it up, and give it a fire,
lightning or some kind of aspect except for the divine one.
    IpZenyPro

[d3] DON'T VISIT MY CHANNEL!!!! HIGH RISK!!! RIMAXE RATTLE

[d3] Masterkizz=Australian Morgan Freeman?   RazorxscooterFTW

[d3] second to none, i am first!! sondio

[b2] YES! Matt Stamm

[d5] Djakxn   Beans Mcballs

[a1] I really love the way you're able to laugh through all the most
terrible parts of this game. Jon McGuirk

[b2] i never expected to laugh so much watching a dark souls let's
play! Andrew

[b1] 'That's another one to add to the
LIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIII
IIIIIIIST' *splat*   SpamTheDamage

[d4] Thanks and yer I gave it a break also because it sorta took over
my life haha. guess that means it was on hell of a game. burns0100

[a1][d1]   WOW... 50 days...? That's 1200 hours! Very cool! I'd
probably have more than I do if I played co-op. I decided not to update
my XBox Live until DS2 comes out so I play offline. I need to give DS a
break too. It gets in the way of stuff I should be doing.James Gowan

[c4] Oops -- yep a bit late. Sorry. Sometimes I comment on stuff I
know that might benefit someone else. I'm about to finish my NG++ and
start on the next one. How's your DS life going?!   James Gowan

[c1][c4]   AGREED!... I specifically have started off on several games
as a Bandit for the Spider Shield and the Battle Axe. I generally take
the Axe up to 14 or 15 and buff it with the Magic Weapon spell as soon
as I throw a few stats into MAGIC and save that fool down in the Lower
Undead Burg to sell me magic stuff. It hits very hard. Mace is also a
great weapon when taken to max. Personally I like Light weapons and an
all around fast character so anything too heavy has to wait until NG+
games.   James Gowan

[a5] Quit and reload the game. Generally the stuff that's supposed to
be there shows up after that.   James Gowan

[b2] Dis temple smh   Р'СЂСЌКPSPrPsPS Р'СѓС,Рµ

[c1] use the great axe to chop things better.   RyuSaarva

[a1] you have the most enjoyable voice. It makes your lets play the
best ive seen.   saltyshroom

[b1] TO THE LlIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIST   jorkthespork

[a1][b1][d1]   'yeah man...just get on' hahaha oh...i love watching
these videos...I'm still trying to get through the fortress but I've
already watched these videos five times over.can't wait till march next
year hoping you'll buy Dark Souls II and do a let's play of it asap.
Can't wait to see them :) keep up the good work   darkmajor9

[b1] Lmaoooo @ 11:52\n\nI was cringing telling you not to get on the
lift. And you read the msg and opened the mimic anyway.... my face
hurts from laughing so hard. I'm so glad you didn't watch that blood
stain in front of the mimic lolololol   ReverseWords

[b1] That was the funniest panic attack I've ever seen... that just
made my day.   darkmajor9

[b1] i just lost 60,000 souls. watching masterkizz get smashed by a
rock made me feel all better PSNadam

[a1][b2]   I know right, i was yelling so much for him to go into
traps, so he could suffer, as i did! Sorry MasterKizz, love ya, but
sometimes men just wanna see newbies burn... mAnIaCoOkIeS

[a2] Kizz's antidote to grave situations and certain death in Senns Fortress. Laugh and improvise your way through...you've gotta love him :)   rurimino

[b1] oH MY GOD THE ENDING I'M LAUGHING SO HARD   toosecret2no

[c1] but halberd's don't chop : /\n   bob last

[a1] You're just a little flat, you're still good, you're still good!   Mesadeath C Cube

[a1] lots of 'lols' in this one masterkizz :D haha, really enjoying watching you play through this game   SakaSpuds

[b2] I was waiting for you to open that chest the whole play through. as soon as you started walking towars it I was physically shouting 'Open it OPEN IT OPEN IT!!!' Squeebles

[a1][a2]   The run up to when you found the first mimic chest was some of the best video yet. It was crazy frenetic and your reactions were priceless. I was rolling on the floor. Thanks for taking the time to keep this series going. I share the previous posters angst about what I will watch when you finish this series.   David Nowakowski

[a1] It's weird. Masterkizz only has 40k subs but I think he's one of the best YouTubers of all time. I love your videos man keep it up   Andrew Hooven

[d1] Kizz, would you consider doing a Fallout 3 let's play after this if you haven't already done it? Love that game, would love to see you do it!   Joe Dresner Barnes

[a1][b1]   'another one to add to the LIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIST!'\n\ni love your videos Kizz. keep up the great work! Hoajak

[a4] Wouldnt a 5 second intro text explaining that you are much further in the game than in this video be helpful in not getting so many advice comments that you cant use in any longer because you are much ahead?....or was this your plan all along to avoid spoilers?... in which case...well played sir!...Well played......*Slow clapping* :)   FruitpunchNinja

[c2] Attack the chest that eats you it gives u a really good weapon you can use Realcancer1

[d1] Read the comment in full. If you KNOW the game Demon Souls is easier.   Rem Bloodlock

[d1] really i just beat dark souls today and i thought it was loads easy compared to demon souls but hey thats just my thoughts on the matter   kotzer71

[b1] to the lisssssssssssssssssssssssssssssssssssssssssssssssssssssttttttttttttt   kotzer71

[d4] is it the gargoyle halberd\r\n   kotzer71

[c2] he really should kill the mimic .-.   Jasper Patterson

[d1] Yes, but tanking in Demon Souls was broke when you used spells
like Ward and the revival one. If you know the game Demon Souls is
easier.

[d4] Even if you know Dark Souls it is still challenging for the most
part. Rem Bloodlock

[d4] Thanks man, and thanks for being mature about all this.
      chachingboy1

[d1][d3]   Thanks again, I was curious as it was free for Playstation
plus subs and I heard about Dark Souls controversial name when in
development, Dark Race was the original name but as you can see, it
sounds a bit racist. Also is Demon Souls as hard as Dark Souls is? I
like a hard game but I don't wanna be bent over by a game.
      chachingboy1
[d4] Alright, thanks, and thanks for not yelling at me and calling me
an idiot, I thought there might have been a name change in different
countrys.   chachingboy1

[d1] Is Dark Souls the sequel or is Demon Souls the sequel?
      chachingboy1

[c1][c2]   There are a lot of optional things you may easily miss
completely - 6 or 7 large areas are entirely optional. You've already
been to 2 of them on videos but didn't explore them completely. Broken
pendant is the key to 'Artorias of the Abyss' DLC content (PC version
comes with it), you pretty much can't miss getting it, but it doesn't
tell where the door is.   Flamerule13th

[a1] Dude I love your voice. These vids are awesome, keep it up! :D\n
      Kaiton

[b2] I can't stop LAUGHING....OH SHIT...   Aaron Reason

[b1] 17:47 'So he's another one to add to the
liiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiist.'
      ThatMetalGuy

[a1] It's amazing how calm you are in games. I'm 24 yrs old and still
rage when I have epic fails. You're an inspiration of having fun in
games and not getting worked up about failing.   Brigham Bush

[c1] whip is best weapon no contest kill everything

[d1] Is Dark Souls different from Demon Souls?   chachingboy1

[a1] Ah you make me laugh so much kizz joshbell97

[a5] Get the DLC!! It's tons of fun.   Pig0Benis88

[c2] AAANNNND, just so you know, you got the halberd a million years
ago in undead burg. It's right after the gate where you fought (and ran
away from) the dog/armored boar. Pig0Benis88

[c1] HA! That's awesome. I love that thing. I used it for most of the game my first time through. If you've found the Great Scythe, switch to that. It's not the flashiest weapon in the game but it plays the best. It's mad fast, strong, buffable, upgradable, and has crazy range and ultra quick bleed damage. It's a monster. I maxed mine out with electricity and I destroy everything. For the sake of spoilers, I won't tell you where it is though. Pig0Benis88

[b2] Traps + MK = a good time   Bobby Brown

[a3] Just can't take the game seriously when there're lizard people   IOutDoSyndicate

[c1] So you killed that one that bit you right? haha you got lucky that Symbol of Avarice is a rare drop that boosts item drop rates. You should also have the lightning spear from that mimic which is a great weapon.   mistafuji

[b1] 17:40 'So he's another one to add to the LIIIIIIIIIIIIIST!' Best series ever.   Marcel

[c2] You missed the elevator by big hat logan XD   Toby Allard

[c1] No, don't use the furysword unless you plan on pumping your dexterity and having at least 10 humanity at all times. Uriseph

[b1] ummm dat mimic   Connor Blaikie

[d4] Really? Ive completed the game so don't worry about spoilers but how far are you right now?   mutantbroom

[c1] Yeah dude. The axe is garbage. The Halberd is mad better. There's something better but I like that you don't like spoilers. You've already got a Halberd though. Upgrade that thing. Way better range, way stronger, buffable and you can still parry and backstab. Just an all around better weapon. If you've got 32 strength your Great Axe is pretty legit too. I like the Halberd the best though. As always, great video's man. The commentary is excellent.   Pig0Benis88

[c1] Use new weapon? harry GOETZ

[b1] 17:45 cried laughing. deathqb

[b1] I loled at 7:45 xD   Daisuken

[c2] kiz u missed the elevator to help u thru sens fortress its the open elevator next to big hat logan   johnny salazar

[d1] I can't wait to see you play Tina's Assault on Dragon Keep dlc. It will be like watching your Dark Souls vids, killing sh*t, finding sh*t, and dying from bs things that i always enjoy to see you react to them. RazorxscooterFTW

[a1] Fantastic stuff! Arya Dark

[d1] It is nowhere near as funny to watch a newbie stumble around in Skyrim. Skyrim holds your hands, but Dark Souls is taking every chance to screw you over in some new way.Flamerule13th

[c2] Masterkizz the chest that attacked you, you are going to have to
hit them before you open them from now on just look at the chain if
it's down and a slight curve its a monster, once you kill them they
would turn back into a regular chest and you can get the item out of
it.   HEYMANGRAMPS

[a1] i smashed the like button to dead but it just gives you one like
sorry :)) MrLiker12

[a1] One of these days Kizz, your channel will get so big that it will
take over Skynet! ^_^ RazorxscooterFTW

[c2] kizz that mimic chest has a weapon that will really come in
handy, and from now on in the game you will have the attack the chest,
the way to see if they are traps are the chain beside the chest\n
      joelsalvatori
[d4] nah   louisgworld

[a1][b1]   im loving this series kizz wow, so much laughs.To the
llliiiiiIIIIISSSSSTTTTT!!   Aaron M.M

[c2] Kizz, if you haven't figured it out yet, those mimic chest
enemies can be killed if you attack them in their dorment form, they
drop items when killed. And just so you know, there will be more mimics
and they will be even deadlier!   sammetju08

[a1][c1]   good job kizz, look forward to them everyday, if i can
recommend something. make quelag fury sword. its a really good weapon.
you need a +10 curved sword and you can make it in anor londo.\n \n
      joelsalvatori

[a1] thanks for the upload mk im really enjoying this series keep it
up and have fun :)   TwitchingFool0

[b1] had me dying again Kizz S on my Chess....hahahaha Sat Dhaliwal

[a1][c1]   Dude, your accent is so awesome lol! Also, do not be afraid
to go two-handed without a shield, it's so much more fun!Bitmap Frogs

[b1] Michelin Man!   Socrates Johnson

[a1][d1]   Are you going ot make a let's play for dark souls 2? i even
bougth dark souls one just because of. thank you for showing me this
great game :) you are one of the best lets players on youtube!! sry 4
bad english :)   MrLiker12

[d1] You should start a skyrim series next :)   Aaron Stinson

[b2] FINALLY\n   awesomchicken7

[a1] mmm I love your voice. robin sandler

[a1][b2]   Yay :D\nLove these, man. I really like watching a commentary
of a game that I wouldn't normally play. Thanks!! Eric Duarte

[a1] aaaaannnnd i ordered Dark Soul because of MK memphis

[b2] Once again you brighten my day Kizz.   HerpaDerp25

[d5] Danger Zone!   cklambo

[b2] He was soooo close to the bonfire this whole time!):
      SunAndMoonProductions

[c6] the numbers were sleeping snake dude as the boulder was wrecking
him   James Gowan

[d3] When does he get rid of that fucking axe   Lachlan Markovic

[a5][c4]   I agree ... nice view -- however, for multiple playthroughs,
it does nothing. I completely bi-pass that knight/area as there is
nothing for me there. I wish he was at least guarding a Glow Soul...
something... in order to give me a reason to go get involved with that
low level guy.   James Gowan

[a2] You got parry down like a pro. Impressive for a newer player.
      Fractal Lad

[b1] Too dumb to use it LMAO   WowSu[c]ker

[d5] Because you're currently initiating an internet argument, also I
believe he meant Hypocritical rather then Irony   Jeff McKay

[d5] This is the definition of irony. Pig0Benis88

[c2] Poison Arrows Solves Giants every time. Sure it takes a bit to
bleed them out but he dosn't respawn   Jeff McKay

[b1] Is he gonna throw it at me? KABBBBBOOOOMMMM! Oh god!   Max
Johnson

[a1] What a series! What a guy :) TeamZora

[c2][s2]   At 19:26 if you would have turned right and slowly walked
off the edge where the wall is broken, you would fall straight onto a
bonfire.   XBloodyRevengX

[a1] Great Let's Play man, keep it up! Izahdnb

[b1] 'I'm to dumb to use a crossbow?!' lol   se7enhaender

[a1][c4]   great way to end that one Kizz! dang... i just got here to
the fortress, keeping about the same pace as your released vids here,
i'm rocking some different equipment so i can't always use the same
tactics. Never would have tried this game if you hadn't started playing
it! Thanks Master!   Shane Bentley

[c5] Yea,that too,but did you find out about the cage shortcut? I know
you don't like spoilers,so not trying to give away too much =) Wrarrl

[c2][s2]   Masterkizz there is a bonfire below the open landing where
you first got absolutely obliterated with a fire boulder. Hug the
castle wall across up the bit of stairs and there should be a gap in
the castle wall. If you look down you should see a bit sticking out,
you jump down on that and there's a bonfire in that room. Thumbs up so

masterkizz can see this and save him a LOT of frustration.
     UrSturdyWing

[c2] Its worth mentioning that the bosses in the DLC area are some of
the best in the game. Definitely worth doing.   cynicalsaint

[b1] Epic ending!!! Lol   Kaluciferyume

[c2] Kizz you should try and go back to the michelan man\n
     TheiBenZz1
[c5] that rhymed also wouldn't it be easier to use those bones to
spend your souls ? to help progress   Thelaughingman26

[d3] just picture him as like an aussie morgan freeman slothfulwalrus

[d4] Why don't, instead, you read his comments that state he records
in bulk?   IOutDoSyndicate

[d4] i want to see his face too but he doesnt ask anything of us so we
shouldnt ask anything of him tanner

[c5] MK? Did you find out about the two cages on top of the fortress?
     Wrarrl

[d4] I imagine Arnold Schwarzenegger mixed with a teddy bear :)
     Swisherkid

[a1][c1]   Hey man, yet another great video, Kizz! but for the man-
serpent greatsword you were talking about, it's one of the best scaling
large str weapons in the game when upgraded, well worth usin' it, man!
:]   WicKedFreaK

[a1] This series is like my new favorite tv show! jbn39

[a1] Noice episode Kizz\n   MetalBrent124

[c4] I literally just did the same thing as you Kizz. I didn't notice
that long ass drop, was in a hurry, and fell to my death. Pissed me off
at first.   Slipskin

[b1] Talk about brutal. I literally yelled Nooooo! when you died at
the end.   Brigham Bush

[d3] Just imagine a white Morgan freeman who's Australian.
     sportysausage

[a1] But keep up the awesome vids polo chaparro

[c1] Press y while equipment screen to see stat difference   polo
chaparro

[d4] You didn't need that comma. And no, you're not. I've got an
australian friend so masterkizz looks like him in my mind.
     Pig0Benis88

[c1] I yet have to see u zoom when aiming the bow try pressing up on
the dpad while aiming polo chaparro

[d4] Why do you care this is a gaming channel it's not a necessity that you know what he looks like. SammyDizzle

[a1] Keep The Vids Going Man !! \n   Richard Nonofyobusiness

[c2] there was a shortcut those cages thing, before you went around the corner and seen the guy with the crossbow.   HEYMANGRAMPS

[a5] without giving anything away, i will say that the game ends when you kill the final boss, and restarts as new game +, so if you want to do the dlc and optional stuff (which is all super fun and amazing), you should do it before the final boss SwamiChuckles

[c6] those numbers popping up are the boulder killing the serpent soldier standing infront of the wall   CHFNSTYNGZ

[a5] I wouldn't think of them like that. The new content is amazing, the boss fights are epic enough to be the reason you play it. And it's not just boss fights. Rem Bloodlock

[d4] Masterkizz look at this comment...Dr_Pointblank

[c1] You REALLY need to get an better weapon AND armor artoriasss

[b1] famous last words ' I`m dead' LOL agenor defigueiredo

[b1] Shit hilarious, 'oh there is a jump, OOOOOHHH IM DIE!' (Fades to black, the end) Classic Master kizz.   Edsel Galit

[a5] Hey Kizz, just want to know if your going to do the DLC material. If you are do it before you complete the main game. Thanks   Rem Bloodlock

[b1] Ahhhh I'm dead! Great way to end the episode! Lol Bobby Brown

[b1] 6:31 I laughed so much haha SourDieselManCO

[d3] You mean Seaman? The one with Leonard Nimoy talking about seamen? I imagine that would be funny mostly because of the game. Because it has Leonard Nimoy talking about seamen. Perttu Laukkanen

[a5][c2]   This is how game breaks your expectations, first it teaches you to advance carefully and them puts you in an area where you have to dash or be nuked. \nScorch marks on ground do reveal most places where you'd get bombed though, but apparently you didn't figure it out yet while filming this episode :)   Flamerule13th

[a1] Hard times Kizz but you'll make it lolz.   monpekokero

[c5] hmm....I wonder how many time Kizz has fallen to his death when hes at Anor Londo.   RazorxscooterFTW

[d4] i dont care what he looks like   louisgworld

[b1] aw man- jump in to the fire- you're the best\nBest line i've ever heard in a lets play Carter Cortazzi

[d4] no   BlinkLegendz

[d3] Am i the only person, who wants to know what Masterkizz looks like? RazorxscooterFTW

[c2][s2]   There's a bonfire on the roof by the edge where the railings broke you just need to drop of the edge;)   MegaCharlie98

[a1] I prefer watching you play then actually playing the game myself!\n   jordan denovan

[d2] Except for Pewdiepie`s Fish-man or whatever that was called :p   steaktastebetterpill

[a1] This is literally the funniest LP ever made   Perttu Laukkanen

[d3] Wow first   TDmaker16

Odd's "Dark Souls" Let's Play (Blind Run) – Episodes 25, 26 & 27 – "Sen's Fortress"

[d1] Lizalfos. They're called lizalfos B. v. Alem

[b2] Gotta love sens funhouse   Chris Myatt

[d3] i wish he would stop calling it a falcon lol Kris. P

[c5] so he's gonna have to come back for the wolf right? LokiTetch

[b1] welcome to my fingers XD   PhilipsCDi

[b2] Snakes. Why did it have to be snakes?   ehh

[c6] 10:00 snakes are legless lizards if that answers your question
(they have legs the long neck isn't what makes a lizard a snake)
     Decriminalize Darwinism

[c1] Three keywords:\nVitality\nStrength\nEndurance\nIt's amazing
Chris is only at 15 or 16 points of vitality at this point in the
game......not good my man, not good......\nDexterity is only finesse
which you really don't need in DS, (and besides, that's for pussies),
smashing heads and cracking skulls in some TANK armor, while being able
to stand your ground shielding and swinging your weapons more with
endurance is what you need. Howitzer Phat

[c5] +Howitzer Phat What rings you got bithc? Slithereenn

[a3] I hate it when people mix armor sets.\nLike really, it looks so
fucking ugly.. xD\nA polished, eastern-style helmet\nA moss-covered
stone chestpiece\nThin, black cloth wrapped around his forearms\nAnd a
black skirt that is thousands of years old.   Anal Serenity

[d4] +Mark Rodriguez \nBeautiful. lol Felipe Rodrigues

[c4] +Felipe Rodrigues Catarina Helmet, Dingy Robe, and Havels
leggings. My favorite combo :)   Mark Rodriguez

[d4] There are some really awesome combinations tho.   Felipe
Rodrigues
[c2] i know this gameplay is old, but did you noticed those statues
depicted the same knight you fought at the burg and look the same as
the knights fighting for lord gwynn in the trailer? These little hints
are cool to catch if you are trying to understand the lore or else is
just about killing mobs and not getting killed   MrRaigami

[b1] 'Welcome to my fingers.' Epic line.   Adam Saffin

[d4] odd the buttstaber!   жSⷮe»єйSЉ

[b1] 17:20 Dude was just having a quick smoke break after some long
hours on the job and some asshole just jumps him outta nowhere and
ruins his day lolevilmick66

[c2] if you took your time and looked off the bridge you would've seen
that huge friggin hydra!   John Sweeney

[a3] Holy shit. B This nigga looks ridiculous.   TeddyGNOP

[c2] I cannot believe he missed seeing the hydra from the bridge. Too late now I suppose x) Charles Herby

[c5] I know i'm late, but did Odd ever kill Moonlight butterfly? Because he went right up to it's fog gate after the stone knights but i dont recall him ever fighting it   AmenoMagatsu

[c6] Nope. And every time he went to the forest and saw it he would say 'Is that real? How can I get to it?' I think he forgot.   HydroKinesis
[c5] Will he ever find the Moonlight Butterfly in this playthrough? :3   Cyanporo

[c1] To use the soul of quelaag you must have any kind of curved weapon +10 and then you use the soul of quelaag to make quelaags furysword out of it   Juco 1808

[b1] Welcome to my fingers. Kody Karls (Blind RPG Gamer)

[c2] in dark souls cutting off or shooting any dragons tail is worth while andrew Fang

[c2] Killing Andre would be quite possibly the most retarded thing ever done by a Dark Souls player. LordOmberus

[d4] +RFC3514\nB Goes without saying. LordOmberus

[d4] Would be worth it if he dropped his beard, though. RFC3514

[a1] Great vidsss !!! colin whitfield

[c2] Darkroot Forest is an easy area and there is no reason why you should not be there at this point.B   Multishape

[a1][d1]   Hi Chris, i've been enjoying your Blind run of Dark Souls. Its a fantastic game. It'll be a great warm up for DS II, have fun mate   Simon Jarrod

[a5][d1]   This is getting me so hyped for DS2... So goddamn much fun playing these games for the first time when you know nothing about the game. Mance Rayder

[b1] 'Welcome to my fingers' is your new pickup line.   SiLenT366

[c2] DO NOT KILL BLACKSMITHS!!!   SiLenT366

[c1][c2]   You need to learn to parry or you'll never kill lord gwyn   Walter White

[a3][c5]   Is this going to be a backstab only lp now?\nIt is really annoying to watch that 5 second pause constantly. RyuSaarva

[c1] Str vs Dex weapons is pretty much a matter of preference. They do comparable DPS in the end.   Pirat

[c2] NEVER, EVER, EVER kill an NPC unless you absolutely know what you're doing. Yes, some of them become obsolete later or give nice

drops but unless you're 100 % sure you're not gonna need the guy for something later. For instance Andre is possibly one of the most useful NPCs in the entire game and if you kill him you'll lose the ability to upgrade weapons a certain way.   Pirat

[b2][c4] I'm gonna EEEENJOOOY this! :D Hated it myself. Now i'm at the end boss of the next area. Sen is fun, once you complete it :D Matti Jouhkimo

[b1] Welcome to my fingers! PlanB threeonetwo

[c2] Whatever you do 'DO NOT' kill any of your Blacksmiths, especially Andre, you will regret it lol ;-) SHOTGUNJEN

[c2] DO NOT!!! Hurt Andre! YOU WILL REGRET IT!   fakemail4suckers

[c5] NPCs are your friends why would you kill them? :(MrGorille23

[c5][s2]   I have a question, also SPOILERS\n\n\n\n\n\n\n\n\nCan he still return to the asylum if the attacked the crow?   DrVoodoo123

[c6] It should be alright since the bird cannot be killed, but one probably has to wait till it returns.   newoldtwilight

[c1] Souls are unlimited and quite easy to obtain, there's not a 'too late, do I have to commit' in this game (as long as you're not going for an optimized pvp build). You can max all your stats if you want, although it requires an unhealthy amount of grinding.\nIf you want to try high STR weapons just level it up, at 34 STR you'll be able to wield any weapon when using both hands. frazzo83

[c1][c2]   Another tip that pops in my mind. If you have some hard time gauging the distance from you and the swinging axes in Sen's fortress, watch the ground! Developers was nice enough to put some marks right above each axe, giving you a landmark to know where it's safe and where it's not.\n\nYou can also move the camera above your character, it's easier to evaluate the distance from that point of view ;)B   GenLiu

[a1][b2][c1][c2] Another great episode, Sen's fortress time. Can't wait to see your first encounter with the first M..M... (no spoil, you'll see).\n\nAbout the advises :\n\n1/ Don't kill Andre nor any NPC you can talk to. I'm not saying that killing some of them isn't valuable at some point but you have to know what you're doing when it stand to kill someone who can potentially help you out in this hell.\nPlus, you'll never regret to leave them alive. No worry.\n\nKilling Andre might even result of making the game impossible to complete for a beginner (Quiet frankly, I doubt you can take down the four kings with a +7 Falchion, and since this is your first run, finding weapons that doesn't need the help of Andre to be upgraded is ridiculously hard).\nMy advice would be to leave everybody alive, at least for your first run on the game. If you restart another game or plan to do a new game + then you can think about killing some of them (but even though, Blacksmith are incredibly valuable in this game, the only one who could be killed without harming you is the only one you can't kill. Maybe Vamos as well but there is no real benefit in doing so).\n\n2/ To answer your question a strength weapon won't allow you to kill your enemies faster, in fact, this is quiet the opposite.\nOn paper they're indeed do much more damage but they are also significantly slower, giving you some hard time to land a

hit (the battle axe isn't the best example as it's damage aren't that different from the Falchion. This isn't a 'real' str. weapon but much more like a cross over between a str. and a dex. weapon (in term of fighting style I mean).\nStrength weapons are good because they can stun your opponents and destroy their stamina, giving you the power to stun lock them and do massive damage after landing the first hit but this first attack is usually pretty hard to land and you have to be patient and/or master parry and backstab in order to get a real benefit out of a str. weapon.\n\nI think you made the right choice of weapon, your Falchion feels weak because you haven't upgraded it to the max (you can upgrade it further, even now, there is a few places where you can get some Large titanite shard. I'm not telling you now, just in case you want to find them by yourself but feel free to ask if you want to ;)\nOnce you get a +1O Falchion it will be easier but keep in mind that man-serpent has a ton of hit points anyway. You won't kill them that easy, even with a str. weapon.\n\n3/ Don't be afraid to die in DS. You don't practice the parry because you're afraid to die and lose your souls.B \nPracticing the Parry would be indeed extremely valuable. I'm not saying that you won't be able to complete the game without knowing how to parry but it would make your life a 1OOO times easier (as some part of the game are some pain in the ass if you don't know how to parry).\n\nDon't hesitate to practice and no worry if you die and lose some souls. This is not a big deal and in return, you'll get a skill that will change your life. GenLiu

[c5] Does anyone know what the deal is with all the dead soldiers standing in these rooms ? Really nice Playthrough anyway.Erec420

[c1][c2]   oh yeah, there is a scythe down here with those titanite demons, i bet its an improvment over the falchion Handtomouth 8991

[b1] lol, misses illusory wall, starts hitting walls just afterwords...   Handtomouth 8991

[c1] you should really practice parrying, the serpents arent too bad, but if you miss,you risk taking alot of damage, so i recommend trying the hollows, and smooth move with the stone chest:P Handtomouth 8991

[c2] go back down where the stone giants were for the butterfly, and also look for a suspicious tree to your right when you enter the area :)   Handtomouth 8991

[c1] Do a quality build (strenght and dex) Aster

[c1][c2]   You should learn to parry :P it's really useful, for example those serpent soldiers are really easy if you know when to parry   asd sd

[a4] Dang you upload quick man, keep it up :)   DainnX

[c1][c2]   Darkroot garden/basin have like 3 bosses and other important charachters that you haven`t met yet. Sen`s Fortress is a bit to early. And visit 'Undead Asylum' again (jump out from the Elevator near the Bird), You need that rusty ring. Sorry for spoiling a bit, but it`s important. Dont kill 'Andre' He can Divine' your weapons, makes it easier in some areas, but it`s not crusial. RB north

[c2] Dear God Odd unless you are sure never kill net's that in anyway help you   John Widner

[b1] 'Welcome to my fingers' Sounded so dirty lol PinkRibbonScars11

[c1] Hey Chris! Did you know that successfully parrying (LT) and then hitting makes the same effect as a backstab? Try it out! Paulie Pi

[c1] you'll be more comfortable fighting in tight spaces when you become an authority in parrying and riposting.B \n\nstrength build may be right for you since you like hitting only once or twice then getting out.B   Garfield Herriot

[a1][c2]   You really need to start fighting the bosses instead of completely skipping the white lights. It's a little irritating. I love your videos, don't get me wrong, but bosses are the better parts of PvE. Mikael Smith

[b2][c2]   Chris, RULE #1 NEVER KILL NPCs...come on man, surprised you even suggested that... Dickson Dickson

[c2] DO. NOT.B KILL. ANDRE.   Korogames

[a1][c1][c2]   You will eventually find a good dex weapon Chris, you just need to take a bit more risk and explore a bit more, you already missed a few great dex weapons because you didn't want to risk dying. The Falchion is still a good weapon. You also have the Halberd in your inventory, you have enough strength to use it now.\n\nYou should definitely try out the new weapons you find, judging a weapon only by their base stats is not a good idea, you should try them to look at the movesets, speed, range, scaling. The perfect exemple is the Estoc, you never used it and its a great dex weapon. The reason it as such low stats at the beginning is because its really fast, it has good range and you can attack while your shield is up. Plus you have a hidden critical bonus from back stabbed that you don't see in the stats.B \n\nLove your videos Chris, oh and please don't kill Andre, its the worst thing you can do in this game. Whoever said to kill him is a troll.   Xt Show

[a1] Follow your heart, go strength if you want :) Zero Kiryuu

[b2] Oh I really hope you open certain chest :D   Felipe PГ©rez

[c2] At the end there. There was a path you could go down to find a little secret. I don't know why you got glitched from moving to it. That was weird. Freedom Panic

[a5][c2]   It's too bad you probably missed the second encounter with the Onion Bro. He's chilling by that grassy area at the bottom of the boulder trail you passed. I for sure thought you'd try checking there again. Damn invisible wall...   Rick F

[c1] Also, in response to your concerns about your build. I know some others have said this in the comments, but it's a good point. There is not really a 'wrong' build to play through the game with. Obviously you want to invest in either strength or dex, or both (plus endurance and vit) since you've already started on those. It's more about finding the

appropriate weapon you want to upgrade to max to fit your play style and how you're building your character. Freedom Panic

[c1] Man, I gotta say. Your weapon seems pretty weak for this area. Same rules apply as when you entered blightown. Either upgrade your current weapon, or find choose a better weapon and upgrade that.\n\nIt's not the fact that it's a dex weapon. I was using my +10 uchi and tearing through this place. It's just that you're a little underpowered. But if you want to switch over to strength, there is no harm in doing that either. You mainly just want to get a good weapon and upgrade it. Plus, even if you don't have your strength up too high, if you two hand your weapon it will double your strength.Freedom Panic

[c4] +Skayth EcksB oh, right. Alright well there you go. Thanks for the info. I don't play strength characters ever, so I rarely 2 hand. Freedom Panic

[c1] It's not double, it's +50%. Skayth Ecks

[c1] You should def. get a better dex sword (like Uchigatana, which you get by killing the merchant in Undead Burg), or go for a quality build (dex and str) and buy Bastard sword from Andre. I would do the later since it deals more dmg with each hit, altho it swings slower. But either choice will do you better then continue using Falchion Ha-Nocri J

[c1] Chris if you wanna lose less stamina when blocking attacks UPGRADE YOUR SHIELD WITH TITANITE SHARDS.\n\nIt will increase its stability. Scum Bagel

[d4] KILL KILL KILL ALL INNOCENT SCUM Tpv Lyrm

[c2] Also, you really, really need to go back to firelink and talk to the serpent. I dont know why you ignored him PacotheFriendlyTaco

[c6] By the way, when you miss stuff, no one is gonna be mad at ya (or at least they shouldn't be). No one should expect you to find everything. Hell, it took the community a year or 3 to find everything, and even then there is still speculation on the plot.   Freedom Panic

[c2] Dont kill the blacksmith. He is the only one who can ascend certain weapons. You'll be crippling yourself PacotheFriendlyTaco

[c3] I B uh, I didn't know you could survive that fall. Freedom Panic

[b2] Aww, I was hoping you would finish the forest areas before moving on to Sen's Fortress. You've pretty much seen almost everything down there, yet you unfortunately skipped the possible bosses, even when they were right in front of you! Irteza Syed

[c1] Chris upgrading the falchion was a big mistake its a very weak weapon and it shows when you're fighting the lizard guys.Sephiroth0232

[c1] Falchion is terrible, a good dex weapon would be queelag furysword, since he's mostly balancing his dex and str i'd actually go for the claymore.Sephiroth0232

[c1] What are you talking about? It's a great dex weapon.   omeg666

[c1][c2]   You have the right idea about the soul of quelaag, you just need another blacksmith to do it. And trust me, you'll know him when you see him ;) That being said, I'm not really a fan of the boss weapons. They are cool as hell, but often not as viable as some of the other weapons. That being said, they can be really fun end game weapons. Really, since this is your first playthrough of the game, my advice is to just experiment and have fun with it.B   Freedom Panic

[c6] And as you could see when you asked 'why would I want to do that?' you can undo ascensions if you would like to take a weapon to another path. B Freedom Panic

[b2] I'm guessing the next episode will start with a death. Mimic :)
      Michael Brahen

[c2] Chris, people who are telling you to kill npc's are trolling you.\nDont kill npc's. Especially the only blacksmith in the game who can modify your weapons to +15... Scum Bagel

[c5] Hey Mr. Odd when you get those armor sets could you try on the entire kit for a quick moment. I now you don't like the heavy stuff but I've been curious what the full armor sets look like. Thanks. The Ghetto Chef

[a1] So glad you're playing my favourite series Chris and doing a great job.\nI pray at the shrine of sir Odd everyday   73ScottybBOD

[c1] dude you're a dex character go for the lightest roll and movement option possible!!! It makes nooooo sense to trudge around in heavy armour!!!!! Th3WildYouth_Guitar

[c2] Look what happend when you attacked a NPC that didn't attack you. You died! (Talking about the chilling lizard) I don't recommend attacking passive NPC's.   Nerdgazm

[c1][c2]   +ussopkingB There's a really big soul (like, the second biggest one in the game if my memory seves me right) and a person who, depending on your build, might be worth rescuing. You'll need the appropriate key first if your starting item is not the Master Key, though.   newoldtwilight

[c5] +newoldtwilight may the things that may or may not be within these cages be worth the effort of going back there from anar londo?B
      ussopking

[c2] +ussopkingB Fun fact: Attacking the serpent man doesn't necessarily open up that wall, not when he doesn't accidentally hit it. The sleeping dude is there because you can play a prank on him. The malevolent course of action also opens that wall up, to a more or less open room with a few cages that may or may not contain things. There's another wall like this in here, but it's trickier because it's a patience (or in this case, sheer beginner's luck) game, Usopp'n.
      newoldtwilight

[c5] +Yung Way thats a breakable wall? whats behind it?!?!B
      ussopking
[c2] Uh actually you should kill that lizard because there's a
breakable wall behind him. Only passive NPCs you shouldn't kill are the
ones you can talk to.   Yung Way

[c1] Strength or Dex, the big question. In the end your build comes
down to you. Both builds are very viable and very bad ass. You could
always just do a quality build (str + dex) and sort of experiment.
      Freedom Panic
[c2] Oh man... Just from reading the comments I already know what's
coming in this video. Killing the merchant is fine, because he drops
something useful for your build and doesn't do anything useful
otherwise (not the merchant near the depths, only kill the merchant
that you first met in the Undead Berg) Killing the blacksmiths or the
majority of NPCs is NOT fine. If you are planning on killing an NPC,
you need to really think about whether or not it's a good idea. B He is
the ONLY blacksmith you can have upgrade your normal weapons to +15
(which are amazing end game weapons).B Freedom Panic

[a5] This is why it's really hard to give hints, because you don't
want to give away too much to ruin the game, but you do want to give
enough to really give a good idea of what one should be doing
(especially since most of the things in the game are likely to be
missed)   Freedom Panic
[c2] Chris, other people have already said this, but you've already
found the white fog before the giant butterfly thing, you just chose
not to enter it a number of episodes ago. You seem to forgot things
you've previously encountered, like the capra demon boss and then
seeing it again in demon ruins and not realizing. I know it can be hard
but try to remember places that you haven't explored before that you've
been to.   Matt Ell

[c2] not to mention bad memory in a game like this can be a
disadvantage, as its a good idea to memorize every path, location, and
NPC...   Handtomouth 8991

[c1] Its a bit too late to be going into Strength weapons with how
much you've invested into Dexterity, but you could go for Quality
weapons. 'Quality' means a weapon that scales equally well in Strength
and Dexterity. The Longsword is a good early example of this, and one
of the best Quality weapons in the game can be found in the next level
after Sen's Fortress.\n\nQuality weapons usually have C scaling in both
stats at the start, so one point in Dex or Str wont give you as much of
a damage increase as one point with am A or B scaling weapon, but once
you've got Str and Dex both up to 40 the damage will be superior.
      AceTrainerErod

[c1] if your thinking of going for strength weapons now, id recommend
using the 1. the Large Club, or 2. the Zweihander (found in the
graveyard at firelink). these 2 weapons dont need that much str to
handle.\nalso, if you get a Black Knight weapon from a black knight
(those take high str and dex to use), then you can handle the game
rather easily.\n\nps, dex is the hardest choice for new gamers, shoulda
gone for str, but seems like everyone loves their dex :(SoulShrowden

[c1] I'd say you're already too invested in other stats to make a pure strength build now, especially considering that some strength weapons require 50 in strength to use. The amount of souls required to level up gets to a point where its almost an exponential increase every level, it gets ridiculously expensive unless you focus on 3 or 4 stats to increase. You could increase both strength and dexterity and go for what's called a 'quality build', quality build weapons usually have average scaling in both strength and dex, examples including the halberd, claymore and longsword. Its up to you Chris, I just wouldn't spread your stats too thinly, especially on a blind run. Matt Ell

[d1] Those lizard enemy's remind me of the lizafo's from skyward sword. Meh man

[b2] Ahhh Sen's trap house of fun. Frustration galore, although enjoyable frustration, if you get my meaning. 'Secret ahead'. I wonder what Chris' reaction will be when (and if) he finds the mimic. Ne he he he he heh FieLdHouZ

[c2] There are pressure plates in the floor where the darts are shooting you..   John F

[c2] don't kill the Andre! BlackJack21R

[c1] get the lightning spear before leaving sens fortress :) tischiert
[c1] It would be a very good idea for you to swap to two handed after blocking their strikes so you can do more damage.   Trond N

[c1][c2]   Do not kill your blacksmiths under any circumstances.B You will only make the game harder for yourself.B Also, the unique weapon crafted from Quelaag's soul is done through a different blacksmith.B \n\nOne last thing: You can upgrade your pyromancy flame so that your spells do more damage.   RaZmAFooF

[b1] 'Absolutely, welcome to my fingers' hahaha you has me dying with laughter at that JonathanD

[d4] Backstabbing Serpent Soldiers is akin to an (Falchion) prostate exam...\n... or the checking of oil, prison style.\nKill Andre. You want to, I can sense it. Kill him! He's of no use to you anymore. Heh heh heh...\n... Weapon ascension Shmweapon Schmascension.Rob Gustafson

[d4] Dont listen to this madman! Gilmore Mizzi

[c2] Dont forget the part of the forest where these stonegigants are. You were almost through it (its a short and optional part). And you get nice stuff.maxxam181

[c1] It is so PAINFUL watching you trudge around in that stone armor with a Dex build!Cheesy Power

[d5] Once you go Giantdad you never go back.\nWhat are you... casul? Qirin

[c2] All the blacksmiths have unique abilities. Killing Andre, or any of them would be incredibly, unbelievably stupid, as you would be bereft of their very important services for the rest of the

game.\n\nAlso, please go talk to the Primodial Serpent at the Firelink Shrine. He's not an enemy either. Lightice1

[c2] +Yung Way It doesnt matter which one you talk to first as long as you dont place the Lordveseel.   MrJade12

[c2] +Yung Way\nThis serpent is better for a beginner. The other's words have more context after you've listened to this one, and this one can give you souls for items you feed him.   Lightice1

[c2] Chris don't listen to the people telling you to go talk to the serpent. There is another serpent that you can talk to. At least try to find him. You can do whatever you want but the ending you get kinda depends on which serpent you talk to. But you're the one playing, you can do whatever you want   Yung Way

[c2] There's plenty of interesting walls in Sen's Fortress, both illusionary and not. You missed one right next by the ladder (some fun behind it). Also when you get the chance play with the balls. You'll know what I mean. Play them all around. Neona Kalu

[c1] If you're thinking of trying out strength weapons, when you 2-hand, it multiplies you strength stat by 1.5x rounded down. You can get just enough strength to 2-hand a weapon just to see how you like it.   MrPikaLove

[a2] ' Maybe I could try to be a bit more agressive against new ennemies' Aaaah.... you're on the path to mastery   Simon Fradet

[c2][c5]   Sen's Fortress is where B the game teaches you to mind your surroundings and handle your movement.\n\nAlso, is Odd really not seeing the pressure plates? Gilmore Mizzi

[c1] Keep queelag's soul. It will be very useful with your falchion in the future. Gilmore Mizzi

[a2][c2]   Yeah you have now started to get into the real areas of Dark Souls, also it nice to see you go human\n\nIt would still be nice if he went back and finished areas.   strikewolfy

[a4] Where are you kill count guy,i remember you saying that you will keep track of the deaths.So what is it at now.   NecronOverlord Gaming
[c2] If you kill Andre you essentially just ruin your ability to upgrade weapons. Sergeant Arishey

[d6] I hope you mean ascend because he already bought the repair, reinforcement, boxes   Vices_ii

[c1] *Ascend some weapons. Walamonga 1313

[d4] Until play through 2   911child

[c2] if you whant to kill ANY blacksmith do it when you fully upgraded your equipment. Jack

[c1][c2]   I'm pretty sure Andre of Astora is the only blacksmith that can ascend your weapons over +5... and most other ascension paths

require at least +10 before you can go that route... soooooooooooooo killing Andre would be a HUGE mistake Chris. Also, boss souls require a +10 weapon of specific types before you can use them to create the uber boss weapons... I'll just say that you're on the right track with that falchion and quelaag's soul. Bobby Torres

[b2] welcome to sen's fortress odd - you're gonna be here a while, just saying ;)   omnisemantic1

[c2] Loving this LP, Chris!\n\nTo get the most out of the story/stories, you'll have to put pieces together yourself. Know names of all beings. Know location of bodies/items. Immense story and many stories.\n\nNPCs aren't inanimate. Each takes action, has story and motives. Many deceive. They effect world. For better and for worse.\n\nFlying creature in the distance is a boss, not out of reach and not terribly difficult (but beautiful creature design). Sen's fort is a WORLD OF HURT.   Lee Wanner
[b2][c2]   Baww, I was already excited for the Basin adventures from the worst direction possible... I wonder how long it took to realize how you get to the butterfly, even with these comments. Or if enlightenment happened. At all.\n\nOi. Killing any NPC just because is punished by the game severely for a reason, not to mention the most useful one. Don't do stupid things, there's plenty of obligation for that during the main storyline anyway. On a sidenote, you've been missing out on a smith in New Londo, he's the one who can use the ember you found- keep that in mind next time you venture down there.\n\nYou didn't even notice you were moving at the speed of a snail until it stopped being a problem... but at least you figured out how to reach that treasure.\n\n/misses only illusory wall in area/ 'I should look for secret walls' \u003e\u003e priceless\n\nFinally, we get rid of the noob ring~B ... Who else is waiting for chest action? Because I really, really do. newoldtwilight
[c1] btw sprint button slides you faster on ladders   Wilfred Furey

[b2] See? This is why you don't ever tell people to kill NPC's. 'Go back and kill the merchant!', they said. 'Kick Lautrec off the ledge!', they said. Now all of a sudden an upstanding guy like Chris here is seriously considering killing Andre.\n\nI hope everyone who told him to kill people are absolutely ashamed of themselves.   hahahahva

[c4] +Matt EllB I used to be a leohalberd guy, till I noticed I killed people in 2 counter hits. LOL.   Haru

[c4] +Haru I'm a halberd guy. Love my Scythe (more than greatscythe) andB regular halberd.B   Matt Ell

[c1][c4]   +Matt EllB It's the best katana for PVP, The B moveset isn't its allure but the fact that it has longer ranger, higher bleed build up, higher damage, and a little bit faster. For PVE yes, it's kinda stupid cause of the health drain but I don't usually do PVE except for challenge runs and some shenanigans. Anyway katanas are kinda lame, GLGS is my true love. Haru

[c1][c4]   +Haru Chaos Blade isn't really practical though. I find it finicky to use. I guess you could make a point for pvp, but the moveset isn't too great either imo.B   Matt Ell

[c4] +Matt EllB yeah, Never bothered with the Uchi or Iaito since CB beats both of them in everyway barring maybe the heavy attacks.   Haru

[c4] as someone who over the course of 2 days has only managed to kill the guy who opened the gate and 4 titanite demons I can tell you that this place is bullshit =_=   ussopking

[c4] +ussopkingB I did go back to kill the other Titanite demons. I enjoyed my reward for it, but they're entirely too durable and powerful for the meager reward you get.   Jeuscifer B
[c4] +Haysoos Bucht they just annoyed me so much I pretty much ignored the path forward and focused entirely on killing themB :PB   ussopking

[c4] 4 Titanite Demons? I only fought the two in the tar pit, but I intentionally fought them after I'd already fell. \u003c_\u003c   Jeuscifer B

[c4] +HedgeKnight MattB That part was what defined whether or not I'd quit.B   Jeuscifer B

[c4] +HedgeKnight Matt after grinding for so long in blighttown having a place with a nice view (no matter how hard it gets) will always be appreciated :PB   ussopking

[c5] When you find new armor can you please equip them and show them off? Thanks Mr Odd.   TheBoo

[c5] Yes, do this! Get some Fashion Souls going, it only takes a few seconds to see how stuff looks.   hahahahva

[c2] DONT KILL THE BLACKSMITH   Gilmore Mizzi

[c2] DON'T KILL ANDRE Spoopy Skeletman

[c2] Killing the Burg blacksmith would be the absolute dumbest thing you can do. Kao su

[d5] +AgentNeinB We all aren't the same... not after what happened with the kids.. Why would someone feed baby goats Estus and use them as hats..   911child

[d4] 911child: hey man, Davie's brother died running around naked attacking everything he saw. He's kinda sensitive about it.   AgentNein
[d4] +Davie DonnaB Are you mad at my theoretical situation? Seriously, relax.   911child

[a3] +911child\nshut up asshole Davie Donna

[c7] I can think of something more dumb.\n\nPlaying the game naked, no healing, no bonfires and killing everything in sight sounds worse.   911child

[c1][c2]   Whoever tells you to kill blacksmiths is trolling. Only kill blacksmiths when you KNOW you are about to beat the game. They respawn on New Game+ (NG+).   actualsnow

[c4] Yeah, that's one way to roll. I can't do it, though. I just can't stand reducing these wonderful characters to mere tools, nothing more than... hammers, quite literally.\n\nI know this is just a game, but I really like these characters way too much to ever want to cause them harm. I heard a certain big guy say 'Nighty-night' once and that was plenty for me.   hahahahva

[b2] I'm glad you're starting to die more, I was beginning to get concerned! Sen's Fortress is one of my favourite parts of the game.
     Thomas Marchant

[c7] Those weird statues in sens fortress have the strange helmets with the broken left horn like the strange lightning stone demon things (like the ones in the water pit)   Damocles

[d6] Gosh Chris, you attack everything and everyone on sight! The egg guys in blight town... You immediately thought Frampt was a hostile monster to fight when you saw him. YOU ATTACKED THAT POOR LIZARD MAN WHO WAS SLEEPING, sheesh, you deserved to die for ruining his nap.
     spyfire242
[c7] He might make a good Darkwraith yet. Keh heh heh... omeg666

[c2] 08:50 *No*. It is in no way whatsoever worth killing him.
     Eradrazil
[c1] yeah its way to late to change specs   dagonofthedepths

[b2][c1][c2]   Missed the Eastern Armor's description. And dang you didn't even try the boss in Darkroot Garden whose fog you found a while ago :/ it's definitely way easier than Sen's Funhouse. And NO, FOR GOD'S SAKE CHRIS DO NOT KILL ANDRE!!! As I said a few eps ago when you shot the raven, 99% of the times it's not worth it to kill NPCs that don't aggro you first. Andre especially, he's arguably the most useful blacksmith in the game! Besides his convenient location, he's the only one B that can ascend B standart weapons (the best type) past +5 and +10, as well as create Divine, Occult, and Raw weapons. That aside, I can't wait to see your reaction to see your reaction to some of the traps here in the Funhouse ;) And not to spoil too much, but I really hope you find a certain hidden NPC there   jmcm30

[c1] I don't think Chris will miss the 'benefit' of creating Raw weapons but yeah, you're totally right anyway.   GenLiu

[c5] The NPC that sells the large titanite shards? Jeuscifer B

[c6] +NecronOverlord95B Wasn't talking about that enemy, although I definitely want to see that as well. I was talking about the new friendly NPC you can find there   jmcm30

[c4][c7]   Im calling it right now next episode he die's to the Npc much like i did my first time and second cuz i forgot :) NecronOverlord Gaming
[c2] You missed alot of stuff back in blighttown, including another covenant.   Phantom Cooper

[c1] Not at all, they are both Katanas, but very different weapons.
     Phantom Cooper

[c1] And an Iato. Which is basically the same as the drop you get from the merchant.   Matt Ell

[c2] Chris, that area in the forest where you fought those stone giant things is the entrance to where that giant butterfly is. You should definitely check it out some time.PinkRibbonScars11

[c2] DON'T KILL YOUR BLACKSMITHS!! i can't believe you are thinking this.. You gave him a LARGE Ember... pay attention on what you are saying..   mex1jvr

[c7][d4]   I think the evil within Lordran is starting to wither away at Chris' soul, I wouldn't be surprised if by the end of this game he's a completely different guy... :O\nWatch out if you see Chris in the street, he may gank you if he thinks you'll drop a Twinkie \n:P
      Rogue Reaper
[c2] Killing npc's is usually not a good idea. They don't respawn, ever. Frank the Tank

[c2] +frankothetanqB Definitely agree with that. And you can learn the story of the firekeeper, which is cool because the story of DS is a huge part of the experience. GenLiu

[c2] Exactly. Even Lautrec has his uses at a point and at the point where the firekeeper is killed you don't really need firelink at that moment anyways. Frank the Tank

[c2] +no23232323B Not necessarily, Lautrec can help you out against a few bosses but you don't need him much. You'll miss a piece of the story though, nothing terrible but yeah, you'll miss it.\n\nThe guy sitting at the bonefire could've been a bad idea if you didn't know the game but since you're watching some let's play and therefore, know what to do and where to go. It won't harm you.   GenLiu

[c2] +SajtosbГўcsiB I don't understand the big deal everyone has with Lautrec. As Odd has demonstrated, once you leave Blight Town you don't need the Firelink Shrine (Andre becomes your new hub bonfire).\n\nYurt on the other hand... Qirin

[d4] +SajtosbГўcsi\nOK thank you, they both jumped of the same cliff in very tragic deaths =)   no23232323

[c2] Just because they aren't of use at the moment doesn't justify just killing them!   Phobosinadamant

[d2] I remember watching the let's play of a guy who turned out like that by the time he got to the DLC... B it's the most infuriating thing to see someone hack up innocent characters that din't give anything the moment they've met them or missed the chance to trade.\n\n'save out princess!' 'SURE THING :D'\n'the fuck is this weirdo wheezing on the ground?' /kills immediately/.......   newoldtwilight

[c2] Odd! If you kill the smith andre you pretty much ruined your whole game. Please dont tell me you already killed him:(
      stinkenderhirsch

[c1] dont worry, there are some slow, hard hitting dex-weapons aswell.\n\nalso, (12:40) upgrade your damn bow ^^ Grendich

[b1] 'Everything is this area was really strong...'\nKills a tree in two hits.   omeg666

[c2] DON'T KILL ANDRE!!!   Thomas Marchant

[c2] Please traverse the white light in darkroot garden\nMr. Odd - Let's Play Dark Souls [BLIND] - Part 10 - 24:06   Vlad Zey

[c2] DONT KILL THE BLACK SMITH SPECIALLY ANDRE. U NEED HIM TO ASCEND WEAPONS TO +11. DONT DO THATB   TheMIGHTYticK3893

[d1] Are you going to play thief when it comes out?   rigby226

[a3] Quit running, you pussy! You're supposed to be our entertainment, so fight!   Joseph Brandeberry

[b1] You came here for 6:00 Sadistic Cannibal

[b1] apparently facing a couple of the slowest, most handicapped mini-bosses in the game of dark souls was the worst experience he has EVER experienced EVER...   dedf15

[b2][d1]   Wow, this place looks nightmarish. Really want to play this game after starting the series with Dark Souls 3. Elliot Rose

[a5][c4][d1]   I played Dark Souls 3 first too. Still playing dark souls 1, though. I'm kinda enjoying DS1 more lol. I feel like it's more clever. But I think Dark Souls 3 is less clunky I guess, with a more open level design. Honestly, they're both great games to me.   mohamed youssef
[c4][d1][d2]   +owen west doing it in reverse was still interesting. going 'oh, THAT'S why everybody loses it when Anor Londo comes up in DS3' and things like that   Elliot Rose

[d1] +Elliot Rose\u200b that's exactly it. I would imagine you also would have enjoyed 3 and it's surprises much more if you play 1 first. Oh well.   M

[d1] owen west true. I've played 1 now and actually prefer 3 Elliot Rose

[c6] +Elliot Rose because it will no doubt change your opinion of 1. Whether you realize it or not.   M

[a2][b2]   holy crap, i cant believe you survived all those demons in the water at the bottom   LokiTetch

[b2] +LokiTetch yeah, so many of those hits were ridiculously close :D Sidecutt3

[b2] you walked past the stairs in the boulder room so many times LokiTetch

[c1] when he was cornered in that tar pit woulda been a good time to homeward bone outAndrew Genz

[c4] I had more health than you did and that damn chest killed me without letting me go Big Boss

[c6] +Smart 13 yr old who knows everything he had that stone armor :) Sidecutt3

[c4] I got super lucky when I first played this, I thought to myself 'that chest sure is placed in an odd position at an odd angle...' so I attacked it lol and sure enough SeniorB

[b1][c4][d4]   ''Things are starting to make sen's in this fortress'' LOL I accidentally thought the same thing today, I also took care of the iron boar with ranged combat where he could not hit me, where I thought to myself ''Well this is boaring''\nSomedays I constantly make unintended puns M

[b1] 20:08 ha gayyyeeeeeee!!! :) Standa NovГЎk

[d5] +Milan LukГЎĆ SlezГЎk, ale jinak jo :-)   Standa NovГЎk

[d5] ДĆech?   Milan LukГЎĆ

[c1] The +10 magic scythe is life John Fohn

[c1] +15 Ricards rapier with sunlight blade and power within is life tho   Chris Myatt

[b1] I've made a huge mistake. -Christopher Odd Bluth   Veloci Blecco

[b2][c4]   cant believe you never met a mimic :D theyВ're so standard in so many rpgВ's\nbut yeah I died to the first mimic the first try and actually fell for some others later on. Diddy Melone

[b2] LOL. Dat mimic though. Sounds bad but I was looking forward to when you encountered it. :P Dunndolo4life

[b2][c4]   B I was waiting for the elevator with spikes but you caught it going down and saw them. That got me on both my new games not paying attention. Adversity888

[a2] Wow! not the stuff of nightmares. that there is what makes this game! you're survival is one of the most legendary things I've seen!   Robin Gillmore

[c2] Have you ever played any other RPGs? That is called a 'Mimic'.   Jessica Whitmore

[a5][d1]   I actually found Sen's Fortress to be one of the 'coziest' parts of the game. It kind of reminded me of old RPGs like Dungeon Master and Ultima VII, that were more about figuring things out than about grinding for stats and killing stuff.   RFC3514

[b1][c4]   lmfao! you're reaction to all the demons on the bottom of the fort was perfect. I got knocked down there by a snake douche and just about shit myself trying to get away from the first one...only to run into 3 others.... talk about a heart attack!!! ThunderFoot

[a2][b1][c2]   Surviving the titanite demons was kind of impressive, but how the hell can you have such terrible spatial awareness? At 25:34 the door you needed to take was literally right in front of you, taking up maybe 1/3 of your screen. I'm not mad about missing illusory walls, but... really dude?   Adu767

[b1] lol 29:10 onwards is basically pure luck you used up ALL your luck in Dark Souls GG! Cyanporo

[d4] I was really disappointed as there was not one box being eaten by a man. For shame, for shame. Lankey Bastard

[c2] I don't think I've ever seen a place you clearly have a path to which you could never get out of, be sure to take a chance and explore more often. Gakusangi

[c6] 'How can you tell if a fog wall will lead to a boss?'\n\nYou can't. That's the point.   LordOmberus

[b2] PRAISE THE SUN!!!Teryn Vietor

[b2] I can't believe he got out of that hell hole alive
        PlatinumDragon88
[a1] Sense Fortress. B Genius.   Hotcakes

[c6] From added additional fog gates for one reason and one reason only.....to scare the crap out of you thinking it may be a boss.\nThe only way to tell would be to be told and that spoils the fun!
        Truedag101
[b2] He was SO fucking close to getting the ring!!!   dtrninja

[c1] So many people never go two handed in this game and it pisses meh off. Mance Rayder

[a2] the way you dealt with those titanite demons was absolutely sick.. reckon 95% of people would have screwed that up if playing your character Jayden Gough

[b2] Christoper, you are at Sen's Fortress now. No more excuses for being incompetent ;) Seriously, you actually thought 'hey maybe the way to go is the massive tar pit with monsters in it.' SiLenT366

[c2] Actually there is a way through the massive tar pit.   Keepers Den

[b1][c4]   Damn the chest didnt instant kill you. Happened to me my first time :(Sen's Fortress and I didn't get along very well. Still a step up from Blighttown...   Vizcious

[c5] Mister Odd, when you pick up a set of new armour or a weapon, please could you try it on and show it off to us for a couple seconds, even if you don't intend to wear it? The armours and stuff in this game look rather cool. :)   Halimede IX

[b2] Was I the only one screaming homeward bone?   NaruHina4ever95

[c1] tried 1 handed weak attack, nope don't like it?\n\nYou have 5 other attacks dude.   RyuSaarva

[c4] Yeah it took me forever to find the door in the boulder room too, chris. lol Bobby Torres

[a5][c2]   I don't know why your character is so glitchy when you walk along the boulder path. I could easily walk off them every time. It's a clear bug that screwed you twice already.   Pirat

[b2][c2][c4]   Oh Odd I knew you would fall for that Mimic Chest trap lol, I did the first time. If I were you I would hit each chest you come across just to be sure.\n\nYou can tell if its a Normal Chest or Mimic (False Chest), if you look closely you can see the Mimic Chest breathing slowly, also the Chests have a chain dangling beside them on the right on the floor, if its a Normal Chest the chain will be in a circular shape but if its a Mimic Chest the chain will be in a wavy straight line, check on the Dark Souls Wiki if you'd like to see for yourself.\n\nAlso check out the Boulder room, you have missed something but you probably already know. :-)SHOTGUNJEN

[d4] +Pirat Better to be safe than sorry lol ;-)   SHOTGUNJEN

[c2] You can also simply HIT any chest you ever encounter and be 100% sure. Pirat

[a1][a2]   I've watched a lot of dark souls let's plays. This one is by far the best. You really are playing the game the way it's meant to be played, experimenting with different weapons/armor depending on the situation as you go and really thinking about your actions and surroundings. love it !   Gigi De Murel

[c2] look down the ledge the first time you come back out of sen's fortress, where you meet the first giant boulder. Maybe you see something worth seeing.   quineloe

[c2] Maybe you should hug the walls a little when you enter new areas, especially big rooms, you wouldn't miss obvious paths. It would make your life so much easier. It also helps to find hidden passages and not miss items. Xt Show

[a2][c2][c4]   You're a lot better at backstabbing than I am. I generally rely on parries for criticals; the serpent men are great for parry practice. The Serpent women are not to be trifled with. That bleed damage was no joke the first time one actually melee'd me.   Jeuscifer B

[b1] 25:34, How did you keep missing those stairs going upwards? :P   PinkRibbonScars11

[c1] Remember spears are thrusting weapons, so they're really affective in confined corridor like areas. Certain type of swords have a chance of hitting the sides of the walls, cancelling the attack, so you can use this to your advantage if an enemy uses swords ^^   PinkRibbonScars11

[a1][a4]   The average play through for dark souls is about 60 - 70 hours, and at 30 min episode per day, this is going to take ages!!B \n\nHaving a good time though.B   inayasupian

[a2][b1][c1]   Elemental weapons (Fire or Lightening, and Chaos) do not scale with your stats, but they double the weapons base damage (basically, they copy the physical damage as fire or lightening damage so you deal it twice with every strike) so if you don't want to invest in stats and instead want to invest in Health or whatever else, you can use Elemental weapons. This lightening spear is strong for now, but eventually you will probably want to switch again. You're doing pretty good, can't believe you survived the mimic!   AceTrainerErod

[a2][c2]   Holy shit i didn't think you could make it out of that tar pit. U got gud! Also you missed the path right in the boulder switching room. Was right there :)   PќPëPePsP»P°P№ P›P°PïPePs

[c4] I missed it my first time as well. It's really hard to miss if you don't really look around.   Jeuscifer B

[b2] I can't believe he survived all that.   Danny Yoo

[c1] +quineloe\nactually, he was medium rolling... Handtomouth 8991

[d6] yeah, he dies to a boulder and a regular serpent guard twice, but he survives fat rolling through the tar between the titanite demons...B quineloe

[c2] Stab or shot every chest you find it a good way not to get eaten   Damocles

[c1][c2]   The lighting spear doesn't scale because it gets extra damage from lighting! it shows the lighting damage in the stats! it's the second number by the little lighting symbol! it does 144 lighting damage and 144 regular damage I believe, for a total of nearly 300, plus most enemies, like dragons, are weak to lighting so even if they block the regular damage they take the lighting damage   irishman16us

[b2] Some times you go full derp, Mr. Odd   D3adtrap

[d6] First, he didn't know what a slime looked like, then called a slug-like creature a slime? B Now he doesn't know what a mimic is? Like... These are common mythical creatures we're talking about here... B I just, I'm at a loss for words. B What's next, a unicorn? a centaur? B At least he knows what a dragon looks like or I'd have lost all faith :P   Mark Beckerton

[c2] Well, dragons are different in this game.There are only 3 of them (the gaping dragon, the everlasting dragon, and Kalameet), the others are drakes.The trick is: dragons have 4 legs, drakes have only 2.   SajtosbГЎcsi

[a1][d5]   i really like this video B when like who is this enemy , not everyone B watch dark souls know B the technicallyB   Da Uberbunny

[b2] I cant believe you just survived that.B   clayton9m

[b1] 24:46, the moment that you know you fucked.   Meh man

[c1] Hey Chris a good tip with that lightning spear is that you can revert it at a blacksmith to a +10 regular spear with stat scaling.
    Frank the Tank

[c7] Also guys you should note that this is a blind playthrough. He's not going to find every item and he might miss a few things. Yung Way

[c6] You can't really tell if the fog gate leads to a boss or not. Usually if you encounter it in an area early on it's not going to be a boss. Yung Way

[a1][b2] Amazing episode! It really was humorous when you decided to adventure in the end and had a terrible experience that had me on the edge of my seat. BigmonJohn

in the room with the rock turn table thing, there is a door leading further up the fortress. you're almost up top. keep goin.Mike Capuano

[b1] Holy shit you're literally blind Trond N

[a3][c2] You really need to go back to the garden and fight the boss there. It is very easy and will net you good souls.\n\nThat and running through the T. demons was the dumbest thing I have ever seen John Widner

[c2] And to be clear, not the place after the door you had to unlock. THe other path with the stone knights. John Widner

[b1] 29:00 - I CANNOT fucking believe you survived all those demons without dying. The level of luck involved was IMMENSE.   actualsnow

[c1][c2] Just remember that Halberd type weapons make you stumble a little bit if you don't hit an enemy. Test swings with Halberd weapons aren't going to show you how they perform in battle.\nAlso, I think you should try examining the boulder room a little more...   LAR Games

[b1] Also, I totally laughed at the 19:00 death. You thought it was safe Odd? well protip: ITS NEVER SAFE! MUAHAHAHA \u003e:DDood3dge

[a2] You sir have the devils luck! no way I could have dodged my way out of those Titanite demons on my first playthrough xD Dood3dge

[a2] Mad proprs for surviving the titanite demons. I was sure you'd lose your souls to the two stronger ones.   Melinon

[c4] Those two was some bitches i died to them like 5 times trying to get there drops and souls (if it even has worth in it) Cyanporo

[c1] Odd - just a tip that I hoped you'd find useful. B When you're locked on, you can still sprint (but only *towards* enemies).
B Sprinting toward an enemy with more reach than you is super useful, even if you're only sprinting for half a second. B In some of these videos you also circle enemies a lot looking for a backstab. B In this case you can start sprinting forward and then push the joystick to the side a little to quickly get right past them (you'll also turn around quickly since you're locked on). B Most enemies can't keep up with that as well as they can if you simply strafe around them.   aaronb8787

[b2][d6]   *discovers the main gimmick of the area, changing the direction of the boulders*\n*doesn't experiment with the darn thing*\n*doesn't explore the room the mechanism is*\n*wonders why he's having trouble making progress*\n\nXD Ooo, this area's going to be fun to watch, I can tell. MrQuazerGames

[c2] Yeah these fake chests (Mimics) are really funny.^^\nThere are a few ways to find out if its a normal or a fake chest so investigate them and try things out.   maxxam181

[a1][d1]   love these videos, they keep me sane while I wait for Dark Souls II   mdeschain

[b2] The staple of RPGs: the mimic.   Akul

[a2][c2] You were so close in the Boulder Control room to the finding the right way. Still fun episode and good observations on your part, you found more stuff in there than I did on my first playthrough. But take a closer look at the floor tiles in the areas where there are darts flying at you and you will see the triggers.\n\nAlso, that pit with the Ladder, I wonder what would happen if it got filled with Boulders...? Maybe you should find out. The stone you dropped showed you there is a bottom, so that means it would only take maybe 5 Rocks to fill it...\n\nLast hint, that sleeping Guard, why not leave him alone and aim the Boulders at him and THEN go and look at what happens... BishopECL412

[b1][d1]   XD 6:21 classic treasure chest trap. like in WoW and Tiny tina's adventure.Whitedragonking Ocola

[d4] Well its the oldest I know.B   Whitedragonking Ocola

[c2] The Mimic is a concept a 'little' older than WoW.. or most of its fanbase for that matter...   mmaattoouu

[c2] Yeah, check the room with the rocks again..   John F

[a5] 70% of this game is stabbing people in the butt.   Whitedragonking Ocola

[d4] +Sulfur Furious TY :) Whitedragonking Ocola

[d4] Whitedragonking Ocola That comment made my day xD   Sulfur Furious

[c6] That right there my friend, is a mimic ZeroHxC07

[a2][c1][c2]   Awesome work in the fortress, it neat seeing someone run though it blind, they are a lot of neat things you can do with the boulders, if you pay attention too the different paths they can go downB \n\nPS- I love the Scythe, maybe trying more then one hit with a weapon would help you get a better feel for them, but weapon is a perfance thing more then anything Decio

[b2] Hahaha, was waiting for the mimic so much.B One of my favorite parts of blind LPs of this game.\n\nAlso Mr. Odd, pay attention to what you're looking at more!B You looked at the way to progress more than once but never noticed it.   RaZmAFooF

[a2][b2]   And holy shit, I CANNOT believe that you survived that tar pit, while getting the items as well. Those dodging skills, combined with a ton of luck... holy crap man   jmcm30

[c1] if you were full on heavy wepons, i think ur best weapon choice would be silver knight spear, demon spear, or dragon slayer spear   Pencilneck357

[a2][c2]   Ooooh nice, you actually killed the mimic without dying!! Yes regular chests do have several different caratheristics from mimics, but since it's your first playthrough it's probably better if you just attack every chest from now on. Or you could try and throw a Loyd's Talisman on one, as a little tip. I reccomend that you mess around with the boulder mechanism a bit more as well.   jmcm30

[c1] I think you should just go all out and were heavy armor and use dex weapons because u invested alot in to it Pencilneck357

[c1][c2]   two things. One, there is actually a pretty useful ring you can get if you let the boulders stack at a certain place (comments suggested that you might try playing with the balls, and there are at least 2 secrets from doing this). Two, you were on the right path when you were in the room where you could change the direction of the balls (keep going up). Freedom Panic

[c1] Its quite a nice passive to have if you have a spare ring slot. Means you'll get drops like the silver knight shield without farming.   Matt Ell

[c7] +quineloeB True, but it is possible he'll want to farm at some point to upgrade his weapon and do it off screen.B Freedom Panic

[c1] that ring is only really useful if you decide to actually farm something. For a non-farming let's play, the ring has little value.B \nBut good call in telling him to play with his balls. quineloe

[a5][c4]   Its funny because I can remember getting soo lost in this game, but now I know everywhere like the back of my hand. Its another good feature, not having a map, it makes you learn the lay of the land.   Matt Ell

[c2][c7]   there is a bonfire in sens but its a well hidden bonfire toward the top. at this rate i would guess he will be at sens for one to three more days depending on if he finds his way or gets confused.B   cantseeme402

[c2] Chris, tell me you noticed the pressure plates on the floor. The ones that make the arrows fire from the walls? You did notice those, right? Because they're the ones that fire the arrows, y'know. It's not just an invisible trigger.\nI mean, I know nothing about Dark Souls whatsoever, but I know a arrow-triggering-pressure-plate when I see one. ferchrissakes

[c5] i am surprised he was not invaded. is his internet off to avoid invasions? cantseeme402

[c2] Great video Chris there's only one path left to try with the rocks 73ScottybBOD

[c2] As far as the mimics are concerned, there is a way to tell whether or not a chest is a mimic. I won't spoil it for you, see if you can figure it out by observing the chests.   Freedom Panic

[c1] Weapons upgraded with any kind of elemental power have no scaling. They are often used on low level builds for crazy amounts of damage.\n\nYou can upgrade lightning weapons at the next blacksmith you meet. It needs titanite chunks though   asd sd

[a2] Wow! Odd! You are just TEARING through Sen's Fortress. I am impressed.B   Freedom Panic

[a2] +cantseeme402B kmon he's fucking rolling this game, do you expect him to discover all the secrets in its first playthrough? He didnt even get touched by a single dart.   llucllumador

[a2] +cantseeme402B True, but that's understandable. He's pulling off some crazy moves. And by getting lost, he's actually discovering some secrets that alot of people would otherwise miss.   Freedom Panic

[c2] he is surviving but he is crazy lost. he missed the doorway near the bolder launcher, thus he is running in circles.B   cantseeme402

[a2][c1][c2]   1. Chris. The giant boulders are giant. (wink) They are really heavy (wink-wink). They are so giant and heavy they could probably destroy whatever stands in their way (wink-wink-wink). They are also really round and maybe they could fit something as round as them (wink-wink-wink).\n2. That scythe was really fascinating, no wonder your character got distracted from some shady-looking walls while studying the story of this weapon (wink-wink-wink).\n3. That was the sassiest heist I've seen. Running around that Titanite demon snatching his stuff was priceless! I'd really suggest you use your homeward bones in times like these! Looks like you completely forgot you have these wonderful little things which could save you a ton of souls.   Neona Kalu

[b1] You're actually thinking of jumping into a hole... I think dark souls got to you.MrPikaLove

[b1] oh my god the tar pit almost gave me a heart attack Amalia Fameliari
[d6] *Goes up to boulder lever, misses doorway to continue on* *Takes super hard path*\n\nOh Odd, you so silly.   Gilmore Mizzi

[b1] Sense Fortress   Birm

[a2][c2]   Oh a Mimic(the chest), interesting fact, the Mimic's teeth are the fingers of its victims\n\nLightning damage means it doesn't scale but get a bonus that roughly doubles its damage depending on enemy resist, but Lightning falls off earlier the most other damage types, also nice to see you using a new weapon   strikewolfy

[c2] Another tip for you is to find one of the best rings in game. All what you need to do is to go back to your second boss. Just go a bit around and you will find a very ...interesting guy stinkenderhirsch

[d4] I keep saying this in every video XD   Gilmore Mizzi

[c2] It's probably a good idea to stab every chest you see from now on if is blind game play :D there are some infested area ahead with them lol by the way they are Mimics   Shadow86

[c2] and another thing those big stone demons are called Titianite Demons.There basicly Demons made completely out of Titianite   Colby Simpson

[c2] If the door looks epic, it's a boss. But part of the fear involved in dark souls, is that you don't know what is behind the door.   Freedom Panic

[b1][b2][c1][c2] /looks at preview image and giggles like a madwoman/ This is gonna be fun... dang, dat stone armor be working its magic, you survived! :0 YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT IT IS OMFG Next time you face a mimic (that's the scientific name), try a Loyd's Talisman on it, it's a fun little trick.\n\nSo basically the full package... for a Griggs of Vinheim cosplay. Who is still waiting for you behind a closed door in Undead Burg if I'm not mistaken.\n\nNext time play around a little more with those boulder mechanics... the deep circular pit and the sleeping dude were there for a reason. This place is not only full of traps, but also pleasant surprises.\n\n'Who switched that back, then...?' I guess you already know, or rather saw the answer by now. Then again, you keep missing the only way towards progress, so I don't know... hehe, can't fool things with no ears, Odd.\n\nYou really might wanna clear out some easier areas first... once again, take the Taurus Demon tower, get back to the old parts of Drakroot Garden or sniffle around the elevator from Firelink to Parish. Hell, might as well pay a visit to New Londo again.   newoldtwilight

[c6] +Freedom PanicB I write the message as the episode goes and publish it once it's finished, but I tend to leave mistakes or think I said too much concerning a topic, that's when I edit them... trying not to spam comments, there are plentiful anyway.\n

[c1][c2] +Mega EthernalB I never told how to tell mimics apart from chests -though others already did-, so he would still get nommed on before having a chance to use Loyd's, what Griggs does or where exactly he's waitng nor explicit directions... He goes where the hell he wants, but as I see it, it's only sheer luck keeping him alive at Sen's. He needs to hone his skills a bit (the lightning spear doesn't really help with that as it makes the funhouse seem easier and the city of gods a legitimate objective), and there are really useful things scattered across the map that may help him with his load or the tar floor. Which things he either would remember to use or not, but on the way he'd get more practice nonetheless.   newoldtwilight

[d4] +Mega EthernalB meh, it's hard to find the middle ground. I was giving him some hints and some explicit directions. sometimes when you give hints, it puts him on the wrong path and sometimes when you give explicit directions it spoils it. Maybe you're right, and the advice should settle down. That being said, I think that certain things should be explicitly told to him (like how to start the DLC)   Freedom Panic

[d4] I wish people would stop telling him what to do and just gave him hints instead. Oh well, I've been trying that for days now, but no sucess.   Mega Ethernal

[c5] Do you edit your response as you watch the video and add more to it so you compact all your comments into one? I've been considering doing that, because I end up commenting too much.   Freedom Panic

[b2][c2]   This was intense! I'm amazed your survived the tar pit! But dude, if you see a large contraption, chances are it does something. Also, exploorreee everywhere! Inside and out ;)   Thomas Marchant

[c1] I think your experience with the Titanite Demons should tell you that your heavy armor is a bad idea.   Mikael Smith

[d4] yeah,he survived...   Handtomouth 8991

[c2] That was tar. He wasn't slow because of the armor. Scary Bilbo

[d4] Why? He survived.omeg666

[b1] 00:24 lol   Anders23

[c1] Don't worry about taking off the ring of the evil eye, the amount of HP it gives back is really, really tiny. It's considered one of the worst rings.   frazzo83

[c4] The only thing I really use it for is farming the babies in tomb of the giants.   Matt Ell

[c2] There is a way you can find out if its a mimic or a normal chest but its not that easy to find out:D there is also a way to get the items they have without fighting them. Its pretty impossible to find out by yourself what you need so i tell you that it has something to do with lloyd talismans. stinkenderhirsch

[d4] yup. it's weird tho that that stuff is nowhere mentioned at all.   Grendich

[b2][c2]   I was patiently waiting for your first mimic, lol.B There are tells for which chests are mimics, study them close and figure it out so that doesn't happen again, or you can just attack every chest from here on out.BDizzle709

[c2] The rocks are definitely to do with what you need to do,B please don't jump out the open one, it only leads to death. I'm sure you will figure it out, there only 4 ways it can go afterB all...B   Josh

[a1][b2]   Good video. Was excited for you to reach the man-eating chests!   Mikael Smith

[c1][c2]   the lighting Spear you got is actually very useful on the Boss after the Boss of Sen's Fortress   Colby Simpson

[c2] Aren't the enemies in Anal Rodeo lightning and divine resistant?I think it's only useful for Snorlax, he's the only one i know who is weak to lightning.   SajtosbГўcsi

[d5] lol, had to happen sometime...remember to mash R1 and L1, or RT and LT   Handtomouth 8991

[a5][c6]   +Urf ManateeB With the fixes, and some rebinding from the settings menu, it is viable to play. The mouse movement isnt perfect, but you adapt to it pretty fast.   Gilmore Mizzi

[a5][c6]   +Urf ManateeB You need you use the mousefix mod, and it helps a ton to change your keybindings around. If you do that, it's not nearly as bad as people say. Although, using a controller probably makes some things easier. I find it really hard to kick or jump attack.   Skayth Ecks

[a5][c6]   +Gilmore MizziB R1 is light attack, so left-click. I think L1 is block.B   Skayth Ecks

[c5] +Gilmore Mizzi Is thisB easily playable with PC?o: I heard it sucked.B   Spoopy Skeletman

[c5] What is that in mouse terms? Gilmore Mizzi

[c2] There Called Mimics they basicly mimic ordinary chests but if you open them they kill you instantly Colby Simpson

[c2] It is possible to tell the difference by looking at it. One little detail is off.\nOr you can try whack every chest you find withB two-handed heavy attack.   VanemParm

[d5] There is at least one mimic in the game that has perfected its disguise.   Ivan Govno

[d4] +Ayman AEB you just spoiled it.... most of the people over here just HINTED...   и”Je†°дïЉ

[c2] +ChristopherOddB to make sure just hit/slash any chest you find . or see the chain on the side of the box there is a diffrence   Ayman AE

[c2] +ChristopherOdd\ndon't... there is a way to tell if it a mimic or not... just observe well a normal and mimic chest. mex1jvr

[a1] Keep it up Chris. Loving this series   ninoman123

[b2] Promising title :D   SajtosbГўcsi

[c6] As far as I know, you can't really tell whether it will be a boss on the other side of a white light. That's the point of them, stepping into the unknown.seano1401

[d4] +Rafael VendeliusB Noooo don't spoil it.   Matt Ell

[s1] I like the sound of that.   ChristopherOdd

[a1] I love watching these in between my classes while i eat lunch. Thanks Chris!   Peter Griffin

[d4] Yup \u003c3 mex1jvr

[a2] Well spotted dude, I'm actually really impressed at how fast he's got this game figured out   skysthelimit112

[d5] Hey look, it's 16:05 already? Time for an estus break.
     Mrtyugata

[a2] So, let me get this straight -- you managed to reach Sen's
Fortress' bonfire in a blind playthrough dying only twice in the
process? Not sure what's more amazing, that or the fact that some
people were complaining about your supposed incompetence.Mrtyugata

[d5] You must have an a bonfifire of idiocrcazy on you Nightis81

[d4] oh hell no..   Nightis81

[a3] 'please don't attack me'... You're lady material there buddy..
     Nightis81

[c3][c4]   Holy shit, I never found that bonfire. I went all the way
from an unkindled Undead Parish bonfire, all the way through Sen's
Fortress, through the Iron Golem, and didn't get a break until Anor
Londo. This probably would have made things a bit nicer. TheBlackDeath3

[b1] 'I guess it pays to explore! :D' ...seriously...YOU'RE JUST
FIGURING THIS OUT NOW?!   Enigmatic Nasser

[b1] I honestly thought there would be no fireplace here.B Seemed
like a good time for the game to be like, 'git gud' or something. XD.B
I'm happy he found a fireplace though. Castodas

[b1] 'theres so many rings!'\n\n*has 5 rings*   Eligah Shover

[d4] Eligah Shover xD Sulfur Furious

[b1] ah! Im so happy for you that you found it!   LokiTetch

[c5] Why can I hear...like...trumpet music or something in the
background??   Ben Harvey

[c4][c5]   Am I the only one who gets really cheap kills against some
of these mini bosses. Like the guy who throws those massive fire pots,
I just stood far away in an area where he didn't notice me so he stood
still, and spammed my arrows at him(it didn't take that long since my
shortbow was upgraded). I do that every now and then, it may be cheap
but the games enemies are cheap too, why shouldn't I be? That's how i
see it xD. AgentBuizel

[c6] Well you have a valid point there sir, and to be honest for a
first run its kinda logicall, but on futher runs I get the joy at
really beating them, or finding weak spots or easy early games weapons
:) but he everybody their own way :)   MuddieFroggie

[c2] I think the lightning snake people are females but not sure but
they seem to be based off of there features... \n\n\n\n\nFuck you if
you say who fucking cares   Samus249

[d4] You mean that chest?   Castodas

[d4] +Ipu ha nailed itMaster of Jewels

[d4] who fucking caresIpu

[d4] 20:43 You can clearly see he's going to throw that bomb -_-
      GamerBoyFin

[d4] he is just seeing the other giant put a boulder down   Hannes T

[c2] That bonfire is one of the hardest to find if you don't know it's
there, lol. And imho one of the great bonfires of the game, gives you a
sense of relief when you hit it.B Sylva Luca

[b2] Standing in the firebombing drinking a pot.. Sometimes
Christopher.. Sometimes.. And you fuck around too much with the
enemies. Just stab them to death for christ sake :P Blakken

[c3] I learned something from this video! what do you know. and i've
played through this game 5 times.\nturns out the traps reset after a
certin amount of time in game and not from a bonfire, since Chris
activated the first one before going to the bonfire.\ncool.   Wiseley
T
[a1][d1]   Loving your videos!! I hope you do some dlc lets play off
this and Dark Souls 2!!   Rawr 6996

[a5][d1]   One thing I enjoy in Dark Souls 2 that this game seems to
share is running into old enemy types that used to give you trouble and
being able to handle them fairly well. It's tangible evidence of how
your character has improved along the way.B   foxeye2237709

[c2] And its also balanced in the sense that they usually put more
than one of them as they are turned into minibosses(if they were
previous bosses) AgentBuizel

[c2] They don't just put enemies around willy-nilly. B Enemy location
is almost always due to a lore standpoint or environmental storytelling
      Alec Kozinski

[d6] 8:27 - Finally notices the doorway that had been there all along,
and, in the process, completely misses the fact that the boulder just
broke the wall leading to Big Hat Logan.\n\n9:00 - Completely fails to
notice the huge hole in the wall at the end.\n\nI wonder if he has a
90' screen and only looks exactly at the middle of it.   RFC3514

[c1] It's not spoilers to bother looking up how the smithing in this
game works, so don't feel about about looking things like that up.B
Story details = spoilers, learning game mechanics = being prepared.
      Gakusangi

[b1] 29:50 That happiness! FTR

[c2] Fun fact Odd. Those cobra lightning shooting snake people are
actually gals, not guys. At least that's what a good number of people
believe. Quite odd indeed o.o

[b1] I love how he was practically at the end of those rows of arrow
traps 9:14 but instead of pushing forward to get through them, he goes
all the way back to try to get out of the way xD   Qu9ke

[c1] In my opinion i wouldent use the lightning spear it upgrades with
chunks and doesnt scale with anything so not worth it   XxBungalobumxX

[a3] This is not a blind play through I call bullshit I doubt this is
even his first play through he's just trying to act like it is savage

[a3] I haven't threaten anyone you dumb fuk. Shut your damn mouth
        savage

[d4] hahahhh gump   savage

[d4] +FivMageksB All I saw was goo-goo ga-ga.   Nonuv Urbeeznus

[a3] btch I'm grown man I ain't your fuking kid and if you think this
is a true blind play through then your just proving how stupid you
really are savage

[d4] +FivMageksB You bet you are talking never ending shit. It's
spouting out of your mouth, green and squishy, like a baby.\n\nA little
baby who wants attention from his dada. I'm not your dada, kid.
        Nonuv Urbeeznus

[a3] This is getting hard to watch. He is getting a lot worse the more
these videos go on. Chris.... take a break.   SiLenT366

[a1][a2][b1][c1] Another great episode, I keep being impressed by how
well you're playing! Of course you make some mistakes here and there
but finding this bonefire on your own, with this guy throwing boulders
at you, that was amazing.\n\nKeep going and if I can give you an
advice, be careful with your stamina management. Sometimes it's perfect
but sometimes you kinda panic a little bit and keep attacking when you
have no stamina remaining. Never attack when you see that your stamina
is low, unless the attack will kill your enemy for sure.\n\nI know it's
sometimes frustrating when you stun lock your opponent and can't do it
to his death because you're running out of stamina but this is the
complexity of DS.\n\nWhen you attack, keep an eye on your stamina, when
you see that you're running low, stop attacking and back of a little to
recharge the meter and then go back in.\n\nThe lightning spear is a
perfect weapon for that, it's range allows you to attack from a pretty
good distance, making the stamina management easier ;) GenLiu

[c1] This game is actually more about to build up a bunch of different
weapons to its max after 4-5 pt....switch it for each encounter.
Lightning/Fire is a bit weird in this Dark RolePlay tho, but lightning
thrust to armor is at it should.   RB north

[a3] omg attack the enemies stop running away you coward god you drive
me insane   KillerporkV2

[c1] ifound out something a while ago...pyromancy flame scales with
intelligence,lol,iknow its probably been obvious, but ijust never
noticed   Handtomouth 8991

[d4] +RFC3514\nwell thanks for the info, but that dosen't mean you
have to explain the entire pyro hand level up system   Handtomouth
8991

[c1] +Blake BrillonB Great for you. The correction to your original
comment still stands. Only the _melee_ attack of the pyromancy flame
(which no one really uses) scales with intelligence.   RFC3514

[c4] +RFC3514\nyou act like im a noob at dark souls...im in
NG+6\nB and won my fair share of PvP battles Handtomouth 8991

[c1] Only its melee attack scales with intelligence. The power of the
actual spells scales with the level of the flame. You can upgrade it at
normal pyromancy merchants (Laurentius / Eingyi) up to +15, and then
you can get an ascended flame (and upgrade that to +5) when you meet
Quelana (she will only appear if your flame is +10 or better). RFC3514

[c2] and correct me if im wrong, but the big guy who drops the rocks
down the hole, he respawns and you could farm chunks off of im in a
way, right? Handtomouth 8991

[c2] dont be scared of the giant, if you bait him into a certain
attack, you can get like 10 hits or more, and possibly kill him,
because he needs to be dealt with before the boss battle Handtomouth
8991

[c2] the big knight is awsome for farming large titanite:)\nB and
there is a tough NPC after that, at least it seems he knows about
jumping over the gap at the bridge...   Handtomouth 8991

[a1][a4] yea.! It was sure a relief when I land on that 'bonfire'. If
you push forward you will of cours discover new areas and also need
later to go back, so, break up a shortcut from where you are now.. Dont
work too hard with all your uploads man. It should be fun, not a must
for something (im not sayin it is, but you know).. B cheers from the
other side of the Atlantic ocean. RB north

[a3] Hey Chris, is everything okay? I've got the impression that you
are distracted. You're kind of rushing through now without looking left
or right (even I who has never played this game notices it!). I'm a bit
worried you bit off more than you can chew with all those games right
now :(Julia Maluca

[c1][c2]   Spam attacks on high poise snakemen, poke cautiously against
low poise Balder Knights. Is this reverse day or something?   Lacie
Nightless

[c6] the stuff you missed won't fit in a single comment, and you
actually even had some of the stuff you missed on your screen - for
everything else you saw at least the hints it is there. Good luck with
the boss :) quineloe

[c1] A Lightning Spear is a Spear +10 ascended into Lightning. That's
why it's so strong, it's however only good for builds that don't really
level up strength or dexterity, that's why it loses all scaling.
     quineloe

[c6] Nooooo, dont do any research!! It will ruin a great blind run!
     John F

[a2] Bonfire located! That's an achievement for a blinder!
     FieLdHouZ
[c2] Pro-tip: when you engage BIG enemies, just try to get between
their legs, keep close and behind them. Running away doesn't do much.
     РќРёРєРѕР»Р°Рё Р›Р°РїРєРѕ

[a2][c1]   Odd, I'm so proud of how far you've come! From getting lost in Firelink to finding your way through Sen's solo! Keep in mind that things are going to keep getting harder and harder from here on out, just because the way forwards isn't immediately apparent doesn't mean you should give up! Go back to that giant and watch it's movements, find an opening and push onward!\nAlso, Its time to either commit to Dexteriry or Strength. You can still go for Quality (A quality weapon is a weapon that scales well in both Strength and Dexterity), that would be good! Also, that Lightening spear is only good FOR NOW. It will soon be outclassed by Weapons that have scaling as you raise those stats. By the end of the game, its better to have invested in a stat (or two) and wield a weapon that scales for it.   AceTrainerErod

[a5][c1][c2]   Aww, you missed sooo muuuch stuff because you didn't experiment with the boulder room... :(\n29:05 and that's the part you missed because you missed the illusionary wall as well.\nI'd strongly advise you to just google the crafting bit of the game, the difference between materials and upgrades. The game does a very, very poor job at explaining how crafting works so it's totally ok to just google it.   Neona Kalu

[d4] one does not simply enter Tarkus's room and says there's nothing :P   Andrew Chong

[d4] what ? you need waay more dex   frank west

[d4] ohh please, stop pushing him to go for dex let him decide... Handtomouth 8991

[d4] Man this is getting out of hand, it seems like there are many people now who want to tell you exactly what to do and how to play. Florence Greyhaze

[d4] my thoughts exactly   Handtomouth 8991

[c2] You need to go back to the Undead Asylum and Darkroot Basin ;) John Widner

[c2] Also Darkroot Garden the fog to the Butterfly boss Cyanporo

[c1] Hey Chris, another good thing with spears is that you can attack and block at the same time. Andrew Hall

[d4] wonder where all the messages went,   mdb45424

[a2] Odd, you're getting cocky and playing dumb. Keep being careful and playing safe, I'd hate to see you go hollow. ;)MonarKay

[c2] Yes, yessss, keep using that spear.\n\nCan't wait until you run into O&S soon and realize they're lightning resistant hehe   Rui T

[a2] Watching a blind play through of Sen's is tedious. You made decent work of the swinging axes though... they kept me annoyed for a little while.   Andrew Campbell

[a2][c1]   Odd, try holding you shield up while attacking with that spear. B \n\nAlso, nice job finding the bonfire.   Huey Kruthas

[a2][c4]   Good job on finding the bonfire. The boss killed me a couple times before I realized that there was a break in the wall there and could drop off.   jebraymer

[a2][c2][c4]   I hope you go back to the forest with the stonegiants. There are also some other things you really should get/do before finishing Sens fortress and going to the next area (Its not nessassary but REALLY USEFULL). For example: In the Tower by the Taurus Deamon (the first boss after the asylum) is a door you really should check out. Also there is this Snake-thing at firelink shrine you should take a closer look at. And at the elevators which leads to the undead church you already saw a possible way to jump of. Why not try it? ;)\nI think you already finish Sens fortress and go further but you can go back and there is a shortcut/elevator near the fog (which leads to this giant Knight-thing you see) which is really nice. I promise.\nalso great work by finding this bonfire. I missed it the first time beating sens fortress. This was so damn intense^^   maxxam181

[c1][c2]   There's a ring that makes it easier to walk around in the black stuff. You have to go back to undead asylum and fight the stray demon though, which i don't know you're ready for. After you beat Ornstein & Smough I think you'll be ready.   Yung Way

[c1] If you press Y on the controller while you're changing your gear you'll get a different column of your status screen on the right side.   Pirat

[c1] You can attack while blocking with the spear odd! JonathanD

[c2] That thing at a bottom of that pit it's tar or some kind of sludge. That's why you're so slow.Pirat

[b2] I REALLY hope you'll jump across! :3   LazyLenchen

[c1] Chris if you want to do something REALLY special - upgrade your falchion to +10 and LEAVE IT AT 10.\nThere might be something you can do with it later...   Scum Bagel

[c2] Those cages you passed by like five times are a short cutEli Tantibus

[c2] Pleeaaase mess around with the boulders a bit more, how can you just move on without checking out at least the 4 directions they go to? And as others said, probably best for you to talk to the Serpent in Firelink before moving on, as it explains what you're doing during this and the next area. If you don't, you'll be a looong time without knowing what's happening. Your objective was to 'ring the Bell of Awakening, and the fate of the undead thou shalt know'. After you rang the second bell, the gate to Sen's opened and that serpent was awakened, surely it must know something about that prophecy you're going after, right?   jmcm30
[b1] I knew what was coming right after you said 'So if I see something with fire, I'll put it on' :D Vincent Kendrick

[c1] Chris you also almost walked away from the bonfire without resting at it. Just remember lighting a bonfire doesn't make it your new spawn point, you also need to rest at it too.   Matt Ell

[b2][c1]   Good luck Chris, Be human more it more fun that way, and you get to interact with more NPCs that way\n\nCan't wait till he fights those 2\n\nIt probably really clear but you have missed a lot of stuff in almost all the areas, but whatever, you can do them later\n\nOh man I hope he gets to meet Big Hat   strikewolfy

[c1] Chris wait around for a second after you kill enemies to see if they drop anything, you keep missing items this way. Some enemies drop really good items, it'd be a shame if you missed out on them. Matt Ell

[b2] I cant wait till he gets to anar londo (which I have recently found is ALOT nicer in the dark ^_^)   ussopking

[c2] Now that you are human, perhaps it would be a good idea to check that dead end room again that you found upstairs?\nWink wink\nNudge nudge Sunderfury

[c2] at 9:01 you're stare for a while right at a broken wall that the giant boulder you sent down that path busted open for you, but you don't seem to acknowledge it. B Just letting you know.   Ganke2

[a4] not to mention the fact that youtube makes things darker and we could see it, but he couldn't:(Handtomouth 8991

[b2] All I want to see next episode is Tarkus.B Best NPC in the game.   RaZmAFooF

[c1] Upgrade your falchion *only* to +10 and then save it for later, you won't regret it.   RobarthVideo

[c2] 'absolutely nothing' well, if you were human there would be a summon sign for an NPC there :)   Gilmore Mizzi

[a2][c4]   woa congratulations on finding that bonfire... without player messages in front of it, I never would have the idea to check that ledge so quickly! Simon Fradet

[c1][c2]   If I were you I would go to Undead Burg and kill the merchant. He drops a weapon called Uchigatana. It is one of the best dexterity-scaling weapons in the game. GG   Simon

[d4] Haha, yeah, place yer bets guys. The butthurt will be strong in the comments if that happens.   Matt Ell

[c7] +HedgeKnight Matt\nWhat are the odds that he'll kill the next blacksmith he comes across? I'm thinking there's about a 60% chance of that happening. Nish S

[d4] There's other ways to get it, and why would a blind player kill a merchant npc? Be careful because last time someone suggested this Chris considered killing the blacksmith. Matt Ell

[d4] You are probably the worst dressed knight in history :D Berto Carvalho

[d4] +Anders23 Well I wore a thief mask with black sorcerer coat thing. With shadow leggings/gauntlets. Looked like a member of the League of

Assassins. If you don't get the reference, I basically looked like
hooded ninja   AgentBuizel

[d4] He doesn't have the crystalized armor yet... or one of the masks
from pinwheel. :DAndrew Campbell

[d4] Hahah we all looked ugly as shit on our first playthrough(s) :')
      Anders23

[b2] Never heard you swear so much as in this playthrough lol
      PinkRibbonScars11

[c1] Regarding those Titanite Chunks and whatnot, Christopher (This
will be assuming a standar weapon): You'd use regular Titanite Shards
to reinforce it to +5, then Large Titanite Shards to get it from +5 to
+10, and then Titanite Chunks to get it from +10 to +14. After that, if
you want it to be +15, you'll need to use a Titanite Slab.
      Eradrazil

[b2] He FINALLY noticed the pressure plates! Gilmore Mizzi

[b1] 19:35 Scared the crap out of me   Eric Draven

[a1][c2]   You looked at the shortcut cages twice but didn't go in (in
the room under the giant throwing giant ass firebombs) plus I was sure
you wouldn't find the bonfire but you proved me wrong we'll done keep
up the good work Chris 73ScottybBOD

[c1] Be warned with the lightning spear, by the end of the game a
fully leveled normal weapon will be tons better.   Gilmore Mizzi

[c1] Level up your Falchion to 10! falchion + 10, queelag soul and
blacksmith go VERY well together ;)   Gilmore Mizzi

[c1] Or level it up to 15 if you want, your choice!   Gilmore Mizzi

[c1] Also stick with that falchion. Lightning weapons help early on
but become more and more obsolete as the game progresses.Coroner3089033

[c1] Don't be afraid to level your primary stat (dex in your case I
guess) up to 40. It will continue to add to weapon damage up to this
point, after 40 the scaling is really slow and not really worth it. Of
course you would need to use a weapon that scales with dex - your
lightning spear does not (as all elemental weapons, they just do flat
damage). Non-elemental weapons are better in the long run *if you have
high stats* that the weapon scales with.\n\nYou can't just use the
titanite chunk to upgrade your falchion because the falchion is not at
+10. Once at +10B you will be able to ascend it higher provided that
you find an ember that will enable that.\n\nAlso: titanite chunks are
the rarest normal upgrade material, so be careful what you do with
them. You can still get infinite amount of them later, but it's more
tedious than lesser shards. omeg666

[c2] Haha! Nice job :D\nAnd next to the fog wall there was a room with
nothing in it.Might want to check it out now that you're
human.TAAAAARKUUUUUUSSSSSS! SajtosbΓўcsi

[a2][c1]   Duuuude. Good job on finding that bonfire. You are doing really well. And I guess iit was a good idea to put a little bit into vit while you decide on what build you want to go for. Because at the end of the day, you still need to decide on either dex, str, or quality and find a weapon to upgrade. the lightning spear will only take you so far. And remember, 40 for a stat is optimal (basically maxed out, as afterwards you get diminished returns down to practically nothing)
        Freedom Panic
[a2][b1]   Oh my god! I was really hoping you would find that bonfire, and you did! Good job...

[c2] Also yeah, when you're done with Sen's go back to Firelink and talk to the serpent!!! You don't have to go all the way through Sen's again if you are THOROUGH ;) Thomas Marchant

[c2] Tense tense tense! Man, you really REALLY need to be more thorough, though. I know you don't realise that you're not being thorough, and you found the bonfire which I'm really happy about because it's pretty well hidden, but that mechanical ball thing, there's a reason that's there.   Thomas Marchant

[c4] +Matt Ell I just set it to all directions to maybe get some free serpent kills   AgentBuizel

[c4][d1]   I'm sure I missed a ton of other stuff on my first playthrough, but as soon as I saw the rotating boulder machine I thought to myself 'lets set it to all the directions to see if there's any secrets to find', maybe its all my years of playing games like Zelda, but my gamer sense just kicked in at that point. Matt Ell

[c1][c2]   One word of advice: fast roll is your friend.\n\nAnd there's a certain person in a certain watchtower basement in one of the earlier areas before a certain boss fight that may help you achieve this.
        Coroner3089033

[c1] Lol I've been wishing at the start of every episode that he read a comment about the Havel's ring. Does he actually get it in the future, please tell me it killing me   AgentBuizel

[c1][c2]   2 things:\n\nBe more observant Odd. Just like with drat traps the game gives you tells. Like scorch marks on the ground for the fire bomb giant or the dragon on the bridge. If you look at the swinging blades once more you may notice the bridges are chipped where the blades swing, that's supposed to help and give you clues on distance. You've alsoB missed out on SO many things just because your rushing, like say bonfires. I've counted 3, including the one here just FYI.\n\nSecond thing is, You missed a shortcut that cuts through the entire fortess because you simply didn't walk up to something to interact with it. Do this, walk next to objects to see if there is some sort of interactive feature, you may be surprised how much stuff you missed.   Anothis Flame
[d4] Okay you got the Sens bonfire, sorry jumped the gun a bit there but still. Be more observant and pay attention to detail. This cannot be stressed enough.   Anothis Flame

[c1] When in doubt you can always level endurance or vitality, you can never have too much of either.B   Dan S

[a2][b1][c2]   That moment of realization... priceless. The moment after when you see the busted wall and don't react to it... makes me just sad. Running into the most obvious trap like that made it okay, though.\n\nWhy would you stop in front of the stairs while someone is throwing explosives, I... at least you have a good plan by killing the most annoying fellow.\n\nThe last guy you saw is the one who opened the gates for you. No need to worry about him, unless you really, really need some titanite and... 3k souls I think?\n\nWe don't talk about the one bonfire in Sen's... we just don't. Well done and good luck.
     newoldtwilight

[d5] +Blake BrillonB It's like that with every let's player this far... kind of like a malevolent miracle, if I had to describe it.
     newoldtwilight

[a2] im really surprised he even noticed the ledge and found that bonfire, hes more observant in some ways, but sometimes hes literally playing blind,lolHandtomouth 8991

[c2] You're gonna miss a lot of important dialogue if you keep going forward without talking to the serpent at firelink.PacotheFriendlyTaco

[a2] Well he found sieglind Samus249

[c7] +VanemParmB Lets be honest there's little to no chance he'll find Kaathe, I'd be surprised if anyone does on their first playthrough.
     Matt Ell

[c5] +PacoTheFriendlyTaco\nHe still hasn't talked to the serpent? \u003e__\u003e   PinkRibbonScars11

[c2] +VanemParm Doesn't really matter. Without talking to him you would have no idea why you're even going through Sens. It's pretty valuable dialogue for a first playthrough.   PacotheFriendlyTaco

[c2] That serpent is not necessarily your friend. VanemParm

[c1] When your other weapons is +10 you can make it a lightning weapon when you find another blacksmith\nMrHaja1234

[d4] Ok then\n   MrHaja1234

[c1] Not gonna pay off if he goes dex build, then regular upgrade is better. That spear will carry him for some time though. VanemParm

[a1][c1]   Love the series but please stop wearing that stone armor :)
     ilya k

[c1] Be careful with that spear. An elemental weapon is really good for the most part but nothing beats a good scaling weapon fully upgraded with good stats, and some things will indeed be resistant to lightning. mischitary

[c1][c4][d1]   +mischitary Completely agree with this. It would also be nice to have seen him further upgrading that bow as he's using it so frequently. Suppose however it's his first playthrough and I don't think he's played Demons Souls so he'll figure it all out eventually. @Davie Donna: Elemental weapons, for me, are never better. They

usually lose all of their scaling, some enemies have elemental resistances and non-elemental weapons with excellent scaling can still be buffed by magic or resins and elemental weapons cannot. This makes them far more powerful in my opinion.   MiyuEmi

[c1][c2]   +Davie Donna Scaling weapons are still better against theB dlc bosses. ThingsB like the Black KnightB Sword are far superior againstB Kalameet and Artorias, elemental weapons do split damageB and aren't nearly as effective. Admittedly elemental weapons are good for minimal stat investment. That's why they got nerfed in a patch way back in the day.B They're still arguably a tad OP.B   Matt Ell

[c1] Elemental weapons are superior because they require NOTHING from your character to be effective allowing you to invest your stats into defensive attributes.B A good scaling weapon has teeth but you want fangs and you want them on your tank.   Davie Donna

[d4] Hmm some things, yes. (Evil Laugh)Matt Ell

[c2] don't forget to go back to the hollow in blighttown man, i hope it's not a spoiler that i'm saying this because otherwise, i don't think you'd ever know lol but ya THIS IS AWESOME :D fuck urself

[c2] Tbh I think we're gonna have to spoil about the dlc otherwise he won't get to it. Not having a go Chris, its just really hard to know what to do. Matt Ell

[b2] yayyyy dark souls :D\nB   Mark MG

Galm's "Deus Ex" Let's Play (Blind Run) – Episodes 36, 37 & 38 – "Golem City"

[c5] Why would you want to track so many targets? True stealth, as in just sneaking by everybody without knocking anyone out. Gotta track a lot of people to do that.   Ian Boddy

[c5] Where... are children in this game? Are they all infertile?   The Fevol

[c7] There are none, so you can't shoot them.   Dank Vapor

[d4] Press F to pay respects to penguin prince.   Cole Usselman

[c5] did galm ever finish that one Quest ... The Calibrator mission? I don't think he did but I can't remember.   Shifter Black

[c6] He has, the mission takes a bit to finish. You have go to a place then back i think thats it then it will be like okay can fix ya up with that part. ruick78

[a1] Galm ur da best SWAGDIMITE

[d3] I learned GaLm is already halfway done pretty much by this point in the game Shark899138

[d1] cant wait for the true final boss in one of them good y`all asuras wrath incidents nooberstone

[a5] Square Enix is going down the DLC community divided path... there's so much sequel baiting and a lot of suspect story missing   Sgtsmith

[d4] its a short game apprently Shark899138

[c5] 40:00 well that guy looks familiar. doesn't he?   (Flamerate1) ƒ¹ For Help

[c7] +Artimus Cordeville Was that the Bomber?   RedEyesUDragon

[d4] I wasn't sure what you meant at first... but, wow, that was subtle! Well spotted! Artimus Cordeville

[c1] Not sure if you know but during stealth you can walk through lasers and not set them off. Pretty sure thats what the tooltip on the stealth says   MrChronickills

[a5][c7]   +ruick78\n assuming it's reflective, it could very well be a source and an eye opposing each other (no refelction needed, just a beam that should not be interupted) in which case that doesn't work\n\ngranted it's most likely reflective in order to make the electronics smaller and thsu more functional to use :p\n\n(seems redundant though - if you put the source and endpoint opposing each other it would take more electronics and wiring to do - but good luck breaking the beam and lasering multiple eyes at the same time while

moving - just seems a lot safer doesn't it :p)\n\nbut the sake of mechanic, and its futuretech, let's go with 'unlimited possiblities ' :p　Nyuu

[c7]　+Nyuu i think cause Jensen cloaked like a body mirror, so when he goes through it lazer being reflected back making it think that there nothing obscuring its view of other side of the wall.　ruick78

[a3]　seems kinda cheap \nunless jenses sends out a laserbeam of himself to perfectly touch the eye he would sitll break the beam (cloacked or not)\n\ncheapness for sake of mechanics\n5/10, expected more... :) Nyuu

[c1]　If your cloaked stealth you can walk through lasers.　　ruick78

[c1][d1]　Hey GaLm, I recommend the 'Icarus Dash' as well. It's a little bit like 'Blink' from Dishonored. Really helps you reaching ledges and stuff if you have to go vertical. But yeah, the 'Icarus Landing' is also pretty important because fall damage sucks balls.　Sneaky Dexter

[a5]　+Arrow Gamer1\n I played the game myself, I know. Still, there are at least 15 - 20 hours of material starting from Golem city if you play all the side missions and all.　Sneaky Dexter

[a5]　+Sneaky Dexter no once he got Golem city he already 60-70% done with storyline.　ruick78

[d4]　+Sneaky Dexter the game is just very short　Arrow Gamer1

[d4]　+ruick78\nWut? Seriously? I mean I know he is fast an all and he is really recording in advance. But THAT much? Wow..... I had no idea...　Sneaky Dexter

[d3]　He already finished the game by this point.　ruick78

[b2]　I love how Galm occasionally just goes on a rampage and fucking murders everyone. It's great to watch.　WebbedMann

[d4]　rofl yea　Kinar R

[d4]　Gotta get my murder Fix　　Arrow Gamer1

[a1]　great video,　　Jellal Fernandess

[d4]　Holy shit am I early, I would say great vid but I don't know yet xD.　Ghost Marz

[d4]　Cool　Camilla B

[b1]　29:17 Guy walks by and coughs wrench.　Kincaid10

[b1]　Abortion 101 with GaLm Navi themmorpggamer

[c1] Galm the 'sun glasses' Jensen has is what allows him to see the player hub. ninjascout

[b2] I love those moments when Galm just releases all his pent up bloodlust, and goes on a terrible massacre wreaking havoc everywhere he goes. No mercy. No witnesses. ⬛   Saint_Shotz

[a1] Best thing about this game is Galm's murderous rampages Luis 77

[d5] joker laugh is best laugh   jack darkwalker

[a1] Keep up the great work im loving this series Mr_Mutant

[a5] GaLm i dont know how far you are into the series as of RIGHT NOW, but trust me when I say this you are not even close to finishing this yet   Mr_Mutant

[c1] Galm you have 50k credits now roughly. you will never need all that money. trust me. you no longer need to hoard junk to sell or go back in areas times over to collect every bit of loot.I think in the whole playthru there's only ever 4 praxis kits for sale and you dont need anything else xD DataBase90

[b1] 'This isn't going to be a completely non-lethal playthrough...' *is a non-lethal playthrough*   CueLash

[b1] Galm-Professional abortionist. xD Raven Castallean

[b1] Galm i am displeased by your performance this Episode you murdered a civilian thats unacceptable yes it is your fault you started the fight with the cops and got innocent people shot this must be rectified   : (: *(:'(:(infinite sadface. Zephyr OT

[c5] anyone knows why the cops are all swarming GaLm in the later part of the video? It wasn't alert or anything they all just seem to have a problem with him all the sudden lol   Chun Tong

[c6] If you mean earlier I assume they saw him through the the window advacent to the locker room Cole Usselman

[b1] 25:54 GaLm Evil laughter. Now that's what i call being a Serial Killer.\n\nPS. Keep repeating the minute for at least 3 times :D   Michael Foschi

[a3][b1]   Getting a bit tired of having you just go crazy and kill everyone. Could you do it on your own time? Plus you shot a pregnant lady man. Even if she's just an NPC, that's some real poor taste.   Kevin Jones

[d4] It's funny you ask if he could do it on his own, time, when he is doing just that. Ian Boddy

[d4] This is all his own time. This is his channel, and this is his playthrough. This is not 'Galm goes over to Kevin's house and overwrites his saves with this' time. This is 'Galm does a thing with the game he owns, on the PC he owns, using the recording equipment that he owns, and posts it to his channel' time. I love the internet.
     RedEyesUDragon

[a3] I prefer Galm's contents where he's playing with other 'real humans', where he doesn't go crazy... as often.\n'Going crazy' with other real humans carries certain consequence, but none of 'you reap what you sow' by with a simple 'save & reload', right?   Alex W.

[a3] #4 just kill everyone because its fun\n#5 this isnt your channel kevin buddy fuck off   The Schmidt

[d4] +The Spoon #3 kill more pregnant woman. World is to crowded already.   kracman99

[c5] 43:55...what that guard was doing with his gun?\n\n(he was either cleaning up the barrel, or unloading the magazine, if you know what I mean) Advanced Enforcer

[c1] GaLm I'm confused when you get close to them why do you always knock them out with the animation? It just wastes energy. Why don't you just use your tranquilizer rifle or stun gun? Also, you should use the reveal software when hacking more often you have a ton of them and they just sit there. Sasafran Pan

[d4] +Moonlight Potato I was being equally toxic, all is well.Piggynom

[d4] +Piggynom Okay I guess that makes sense. Thank you, sorry if I was being a bit toxic. Sasafran Pan

[c1] +Moonlight Potato He also has a very large amount of biocells. There is no real reason to shoot them and risk failing versus a guaranteed one shot.   Piggynom

[d6] +firehawk894 Yes but he has a VERY large amount of ammo and still has some at the apartments. Sasafran Pan

[c1] +Moonlight Potato The final chunk of your energy will always regenerate, it's better to do a knock out animation where your energy will regen than waste finite ammo firehawk894

[b1] It helps not to publicly knock out a cop lol Garrett Nguyen

[d1] this game reminds me of the matrix. anyone else?   Jun3Girl 85

[d4] Thanks ill look into it   Jun3Girl 85

[d1] Psst also you may like Pyscho pass. Got 2 full seasons enjoy!
     Cole Usselman

[d4] i love that show. thanks for letting me know Jun3Girl 85

[d3] Did you know the matrix is inspired from ghost in a shellCole Usselman

[b1] Galm does abortion in a super metal way. Kudos.   Alejandro Reyes

[b1] Ah, the old 'Shotgun buck-shot to the Uterus' a real classic.   PrototypeNinja16

[d4] Can I shit on your on chest TheTastedFungus

[a4] Any chance of releasing the videos 1 hour earlier for us poor plebs in UK who have work in the mornings :-(MrObble

[d3] Git gud pleb.   Mavcjs

[d3] Hi Galm!   DeeCee 51

[d4] Cool Diego cabrera

[b2] GaLm Senpai, Soon as I finish a video you post another one :D   MrChronickills

[b2] Just finished this one think there could be another?   SpokelingCOD

[a1] God galm is the best. Andrewx8 88

[b1] 11:12 hahaha xD kim holmer

[b1] Rip the forgotten box at 10:22.   Rey Zephlyn

[b1] 24:45 Praise Talos!! Blessed by the nine divines!! Talos, the wise! Talos, the strong!!   Fawkes Pryde

[d4] I understand entirely the shit memory problem xD   NightmareWolfXP

[b2] I love how uncomfortable Galm gets when a woman hits on him or does anything sexual. Matthew Esparza

[b1] lmao, can't stop laughing 4:50   Kinar R

[d4] She wanted the D Ascended Lazarre

[a1] Entity is ....nice I guess....Great humor... Terrorkekx

[c2] The latin phrase in the Kal pocket secretary at 31:50 'Tu autem Domine miserere nobis' means '\nBut thou , O Lord, have mercy on us'. Roughly through Google Translate. Don't know how accurate it is. But there you go.   Crashman55

[d1] Huh. That is interesting. I know the memento mori basically means remember death or death is inevitable. Learned from 999 and Virtue's Last Reward. Those two games.   Crashman55

[c6] You are correct. It is also sometimes used in brief 'tu autem' as a _memento_ _mori_ epitaph. JinsoNation

[b1] ACHEAVEMENT EARNED: FRIVOLUS SPENDER 18:00 (around there)Dylan Fox

[b1] 26:55 - HAH! XD\nThat fucking camera pan.   masterkevkev

[b1] God damn glorious!   Chris Mazara

[b1] It was golden! XDInfinite Loop

[b1] it was to good dude i saw that and just gave up on the AIHexonic Kraken

[c5] What do you mean TYM will still be around in 20 years from now? Is there another game I don't know about?   SGM 26

[d4] Oh shit, really? I always assumed they were set after it.\n\nIt's been ages since I played any of the older games. Thanks for the heads up, lol.   SGM 26

[c6] Augs will be replaced by than with Nanotech...Tho UNATCO the Global version of TF29 have some agends still using augs....
    Terrorkekx

[c6] Mankind divided and Human Revolution are both prequels to the original Deus ex games. This takes place in 2027-2029 and Deus Ex takes place in somewhere around 2050.   TheFirenze114

[b1] 'well if you're going to make it naughty, i guess i have no choice now do i?'\n\n.... yea i'd tap that.
    Shadowed'sAstuteGamingElite

[d3] Question is anyone else experiencing the new comment format or a iPhone 6   Camilla B

[c3] I just noticed in the pause menu that theirs an icon that's says outfits   ΛNOMALY prod

[b1] That was one of the most ridiculous exploit I have seen in a game xD   Luis 77

[d1] Raise that statement with skyrim putting bucket on npc head and u can steal infront of them   Cole Usselman

[d1] explore same with borderlands XD you get the urge to loot every possible thing   kevin imperati

[d4] 4x scope would be good for the shotgun if it were a Spas12 or similar to it. XD the sniper of shotguns   kevin imperati

[d4] +Alchemic_Gamer\nit had to be called Super for a reason though
    kevin imperati

[d1]   And that's my mix up super 90 before nerf was like sniper rifle
       Alchemic_Gamer

[d1]   +Alchemic_Gamer\nno Frost's shotgun is the Super 90 kevin imperati

[d1]   Isn't P90 frosts shotgun in Rainbow 6?   Alchemic_Gamer

[c1]   +Alchemic_Gamer\nP90 is a SMG not a shotgun   kevin imperati

[d3]   Damn you phone app! You were 4 minutes late of informing me!
       Little Nagato

[c4]   Follow him on Twitter he tweets when he uploads   Alex Mena

[d3]   It didn't even inform me   Camilla B

Odd's "Deus Ex" Let's Play (Blind Run) – Episodes 15 & 16 – "Golem City"

[a1] So you DID read the whole thing!   Ah thanks for that!   Jimmy M

[a3] it's boring wen u read all the details in the game Yomi Olanrewaju

[d1] my favourite gun in the human revolution game was a freaking 10mm pistol   Usman Javaid

[c3] so ever since the aug incident these augmented people have been treated like outsiders Fallen Fighter

[b1] 9:01 That actually legit broke my heart. Never expected to get that level of feels, though I don't know why after what happened last game (digging into Jensen's past killed me lol).   Bacon Tree

[a2] Well, gotta commend you for getting into the roleplaying aspect, buy refusing to take someone's money, and punching a drug brewing chick's lights out.   MsGhoulz

[a5] I feel like some of the voice acting is a little.... weird?   Daniel M

[c2] Clank means metallic sound, like when you hit a panel of steel with a rock.   Denis Medvedev

[a4] can we have the old long intro back, mr. odd? the shortened one sounds cut off. Blub 01

[d4] Triggerd clank. Corporaticus Greedicus

[c7] Wait. Does anyone think Neon could be being distributed by the government to cull the Augs? Jade Blake

[d3] *X-files theme* Jade Blake

[d4] ahhh!you say that like it's a bad thing.   Corporaticus Greedicus

[b2] A new city arrives!   Legion Prime

[c2] Tibor...\nRobit. One of the original alternative spellings for 'robot'\nInteresting. Killer Orca

[c1] Hey odd you keep asking questions that would easily be answered if you would use your heat vision once in awhile where are the cops? Which one has the key card? Which one is the brother? All answered with heat vision.   FIon McCumal

[b1] Stalk, stalk, stalk..... SLEEP!   snarbywrx

[c2][s2]   the pshycologist lady is.part of the illuminati   Sean Daly

[c2] 19:24 hidden button   Max Chung

[a1] Thank you so much for reading the books.   john dee

[c7] Chikane's pretty anti-Aug, probably got his leg bent by an Aug, perhaps his brother.   Gitami

[b1][c7][d1]   Is it just me or does Golem City have this Judge Dread-like feel, oppressed and stuffed and filled to the brink with suffering? Idealists either gets ignored or dies from 'accident', which seems to be the case in this scenario. 9:44 Rough is an understatement, Hell seems far more appropriate. 15:43 Wonder what Clank from Ratchet & Clank series would comment for that. 16:52 God, this place is bloody lawless. I don't think you'll be able to keep yourself from knocking some skulls here and I'll say some of them deserve a beating for that. 26:54 Wise word there. Hell has no fury compares to a woman's wrath.   Yuna Blaze

[c7] I think thats partially intentional. Its supposed to be a police state/slum/supercity thing. Too many people, too little space. Killer Orca

[c5] This could be a dumb question but does this game pick up from the last one?? I wanna rewatch it if thats the case   Todd Schott

[d3] i only clicked cus representation of the blacks   Helel Alexander

[b1] dude, you robbed the clinic! cornellius01

[b1] 31:40 how did he not see you? O_O Tar vyn

[b1] Sleep exitthegame

[a4] Deus Ex Human Revolution Playlist ► link in the description is not working ;D   Tar vyn

[a1] Keep up the good work.... the gooood work.   fat KoRn

[b1] Dammit Chris stop with the Chiffhanger! Win Sarun

[a1] Glad for the new upload! Really enjoying watching this playthrough!   OneDayWeAreFree

[a1] cant get enough of this! keep it coming chris!   SupremeDouchebaggery

[a1] more please!!!!!!!!   David Bassin

[b1] I would have no problem taking the credit chip from the doctor's safe. I wouldn't do that IRL but still...yeah...   Chun Tong

[b1] Yeah, that was weird. Its a game. Drew Boivie

[c1] especially since it's not marked as stolen or has a impact on the characters story-wise Daniel M

[a1][b1]   That cliffhanger.... can't way for the next episode.   antediest

[a1] Yeah Am I right? Chris man he too good at Cliffhanger!   Win Sarun

[c2] Hey Odd, the guy getting punched in the face is obviously the one you need to rescue. You watch movies, right ;) ?   DearLuck

[c2] hack red when possible Ranno Rannikmaa

[d3] Random question to everyone: what augmentation would you get if it was possible? I'd go for night vision, because right now I'm as good as blind at night and hating it! Julia Maluca

[d4] Right Hand Speed -- For obvious reasons.   Lorenz Binongo

[d4] STRENGTH ENHANCERS TO THROW DUMPSTERS AT PEOPLE I DON'T LIKE   SwagiiSawrusRex

[d4] the military aug that counters cassie because it's bad for business and lungs Aug.   Corporaticus Greedicus

[d4] +FIon McCumal I feel you, bro T_T Hekate Bleble

[d4] +Hekate Bleble\nShit! Why didn't I think of that! They Told Me I Could Become Anything, So I became an Eggplant

[c2] As far as talking to Sarif, I believe it still says its in progress cause when you spoke to him he said he'd get back to you. Which probably means when he gets back to you it'll be important!   Mzgetlite

[d3] I picked it up for my Xbox One on Friday   ShadowCat

[a1][b2][c1]   frickin loving this series. don't forget you got that glass shield now Chris. cop station is a good place to use it me thinks. *smh* golem city...what a shithole   howlers8

[c1][c2]   Dear Mr. Odd, you might want to consider returning the secret gas room (since you've got the augment) in Koller's dungeon and checking out the attic on top of the LIMB clinic for some goodies. \nWhile you're in Golem, please consder taking a moment and look in a room above and across from Sokol's apartment. You might find a golden treasure you need to return to a pedestal under the first area of ARC HQ. Be prepared to break some walls. You might get an achievement for returning the treasure to it's kin, in addition to something useful.   Kaiyse

[a1][a2][b1]   Love your play stile Mr. Odd i myelf am in to the same non lethal kind of gameplay but i'd like to see longer videos or more

videos from Deus EX/ day, anyway cheep up the good work!!! \nP.S. Why
the abrupt ending in this episode???   Atlas

[a4] Probably got caught up by the game play and didn't realize it was
time for the video to end until too late.   FreeER atubeacct

[d1] I feel like after this game has run its course there really
should be a human revolution remake or remaster with the Glacier 2
engine this was made in...please ;_;?   SK1PTER

[c6] replace clanck wity any other word like n... or immigrant and you
get todays situation in the world Ranno Rannikmaa

[d3] Something else, much easier to write : 'I eat shit every fucking
day. At this point, my brain is basically dogshit. Trump2016' That s
easier, I think.Gk9311

[d3] Emir, i ll get into a dialogue with you, once you write, in this
comment section, this message 'I am a bastard, a person badly fucked up
in the brain, therefore I support trump'. Write that thing down and I
might talk you. Gk9311

[d3] +Emir Muhic Smith no worries there are many like us most of us
work quietly because the lefty fascists go for our jobs or families.
     Corporaticus Greedicus

[d4] +Emir Muhic man, inthink hes a troll, don't feed him   Barry
Scott

[d5] Or nu-pro with any drugs like trimethoprim or EpiPen. The game
isn't really making a story we never heard of.   Chun Tong

[c2] Mr. Odd - as always loving the vids. Not a criticism, but you
might want to scan the area more slowly when you are looking at tables,
shelves, and in lockers. I noticed you left behind several things being
hi-lighted in white. Looked like more crafting parts and maybe another
bottle of Nu-pro. Anyway... again loving the lets play. :)
     Christopher Inglish

[a1][c2]   And please, take a while to scrutinize the map (example when
entering to a new area) it eases the navigation and might reveal some
unexplored areas (I know how you love exploration :D). Loving the
series nevertheless. Req Direct

[a2] +ChristopherOdd - Good deal! Awesome job exploring all your
options. Love that you try to get most of the side quests.
     Christopher Inglish

[s1] Thanks man, will do. ChristopherOdd

[a1] Im so addicted to watching this! Aikuchi

[a1] I need more bryan soto

[d3] always liked the video before watching Good Guy

[a1] Thanks for the quick uploads! Love the series!   When Storytellers Play Games

[c5] hm, how many 'zones' you visit? So far it was Prague and this one. Is there more?   Tomas Duchan

[c5] Am I the only one feeling weird with Odd's quickbar layout? I mean, grenades on 1 and 3, rifle on 2, pistol on 6, multitool on 4? Why not something more logical, like rifle on 1 and pistol on 2, grenades on 3 and 4, and multitool on 5? And place the energy and health consumables somewhere there too...Noel I

[d4] I just feel nervous. Cheers Chris =)   Noel I

[s1] Yea it's a bit of a cluster you're right. But with our stealth approach, I've got smoke on 1, Darts on 2, then mish mash.
      ChristopherOdd

[d1] Someone plays minecraft :D Lol   Noel I

[a2] Creative quickbar! Lol When Storytellers Play Games

[d5] Ö   Aboody Louay

[d1] When does he post Xcom? Is there a schedule? XxWeed WarriorxX

[a4] what about deus ex   Blastar

[s1] 15:00 EST each day is the plan unless something comes up.
      ChristopherOdd

[d3] 2nd ;)   The Centurion

[d3] First? Maybe?   Tristan Furnell

[d4] Yup. :)   The Centurion

[b2] Really sad that you havent sided with augs and you're an aug. You see what they're going through and you offer no sympathy towards then. You can only ride the middle for so long.   SexxStar

[b1][c1]   7:57 Solzhenytsin... I recommend reading h'es books Gulag archipelago Hermit Ray

[a3] i like you Odd but you are so super blind sometimes.... well pretty consistently   metacritical

[a1] I love this series!   David H

[c5] The annotations in the outro don't seem to work (yes, I made sure they were turned on) -- so what is the video that's supposed to be linked where it says 'another series you may enjoy' in the lower left?
      Yancarlo Ramsey

[c6] Seems like Dark Souls 3.   Buğra Altuntaş

[c1] Have you played the previous Deus Ex game? You get the invisibility augmentation, then don't even use it when you need it lol
     Tijnas617

[a5] Come on it's 2016; how can enemies still be so dumb that they don't comment on finding an unconscious team member and then go into permanent alert? Melbuser30

[c5] Stealth playthrough, you say?   Anon Viewer

[c1] Do all your secondary objectives mate!:(Wicked

[d5] When did this games turn into Sir you are being Hunted xD
     Raid Domi

[c2] Why didn't you check out Gallois's shop?There could've been a stun gun for saleYa boi

[b1] The intro says you can't stop progress but, Odd stops progress at the end of a video. funny if you think about it.   magma1lord

[b1] Damm, big robot arm   Legion Prime

[c5] Since when you can't tranq the guys with helmets? I mean, you definetely could do it in HR.   Venyamin Smirkin

[c1] Uhhhh you can go invis Chris why don't you use it? F Ement

[c1][c2][c4][c6] You can only take out mechs with Q, when they are already stunned. So you did just the right thing. What also works is like 3 bullets from the tranquilizer rifle - the tranquilizer rifle doesn't work on the final boss though if you plan on sparing him aswell you have to do the stun, Q combination.\n\nIf you still can and don't have recorded already I greatly advise you to do all the secondary missions (especially the arc key card) in golem. It will save you a lot of climbing jump and run style in the darkness...\n\nSome more things that might help you in the future:\nGameplay spoiler:\n\n\n\n\n\n\n\n\n- It is really unintuitive but when the city is on lock down you can still use the train stations (you walk the tunnels then) so you can do the sidemissions you get then. \n- at least the second time when you 'have to make a choice because you can't do both' that is not true. It might depend what you do first if you get to do the second thing aswell. The first time I got presented with a choice I actually couldn't do the other one. I am wondering if that would be different if I had picked the other choice. \n- Since you stand up when hacking you often get detected. You can use a multitool while crouching though.   KEine Ahnung

[b1] You just became the fifth living person to know that....\nSaid the guy speaking ALOUD KageNoTenshi

[c2][c6]   Chris, yes you can takedown exosuits, but only after they have been stunned with an EMP round or EMP grenade. cannonfodder343

[c2] you can also shoot a red 'spot' on the back of their head with the tranquilizer rifle DireSiren

[d1] You know what the helmets look like for the police the helmet from xcom enemy within cp K

[b1] How awesome is it that Marchenko called you a tool in the end? I like that guy. Although his right eye reminds me a wee bit too much of the Weavess... Julia Maluca

[c7] Could Marchenko be the merc guy , that was a boss or some kind of a character in human revolution? Virginijus Valancius

[c6] He is not a member of the Tyrants, or sporting Belltower equipment. George Pondikas

[c6] Doubtful. Adam would have recognized him then, or at least be recognized. Core Brute

[c5] Anyone an idea what game is shown at the end (the outro ofc, not in deus ex) ? Annotation is either not working for me or he did not put it there yet. SuperDeadSix

[a1][c1] You should purchase a suppressor for your EMP pistol! Maybe some EMP ammo as well. This is fun to watch by the way, I love your gameplay! AeveryHawk

[d1] Damn, kane got augmented to hell huh? Devin Walters

[d1] Doshan kinda looks like the dude who played the role johnny cage in the first MK movie Devin Walters

[d3] And he just got CAGED.\nI apologize... Anonymous Gangbanger of the 21 Century

[b1] One alarm is enough to take away the chance to explore around Golem City...oh well Max Chung

[c2] you can tranquilize even with helmets on Edward Ciotic

[c2] Probably need to EMP first then take down the guy in enhancement suit. Peter Huang

[c1] ODD YOU CAN CLOKE NOW REMEMBER?. Use the freaking CLOKE Todd Mckinley

[d4] should we call it stealth aggressive pacifist? Lord Sloth

[c5] Chris can you explore the world more thoroughly? I'd rather watch a 100% Clear with you even if it takes 100 episodes than a 70 series. Gitami

[b1][c1][c2][c7] 1:53 Biggest close-call in all of your gaming, Odd, though I really have to wonder how those two block-head didn't see a full-grown augmented guy hiding underneath the table and why won't use

cloak in this case? I mean with the remaining energy, you should able to slip into another shady corner and back into under the table. 5:27 Wasted a bit of EMP bullets there, but it's good to know that you also knock those guys out in close-quarter combat and I think you should try to sell the regular ammo for EMP ones, seeing that you are going on Mercy Soul. God, you really don't have your stealth game on today, do you Odd? I mean, you seem to be triggering alarms and catching enemies' attention more than usual. 25:05 Well, that's simple enough. I don't get it, why ask about the relationship between Koller and Radich, shouldn't Koller's current whereabouts is more important? I doubt that they are bloody related or having an affair. I mean aside from being business partner or doctor/patient connection, I really don't see the point in asking. Wait why don't you buy some bits of extra EMP pistol ammo? 31:30 Does this guy's vibe reminds anyone from another character from another Square Enix game or is it just me? 31:49 Wow not even a hint of bloody hesitation, for once, usually you'll start thinking out loud at this point and weighting and explaining your reasons. 35:48 I get the feeling that's a veiled promise of a threat. I think you miss a few things here and there Odd, double check when you aren't getting your head shoot off, because you're starting to rush things again.   Yuna Blaze

[a5] Exactly. It's 2016; how can enemies still be so dumb that they don't \ncomment on finding an unconscious team member and then go into permanent\n alert?   Melbuser30

[c2] I guess, you can take out guys in exosuits if you use emp first. Would make sense for the game not to let you knockout heavily armoured people while their armour is active.   Eugene Selivanov

[b1][d1]   1:45 Alien Isolation style evasion Eric Heng

[c1] it is funny to see someone unlock a new ability and then he forgot to use it. Also you got see through wall ability too....... you are not using it as often in this mission   Marinetr

[c2] Hey Chris! Maybe you should take a more thorough look to the kiosks? I mean just to make sure they don't sell weapon mods you may be able to use. Not sure if they sell EMP rounds but I think it'll be worth it if you keep an eye out for pistol mods and smoke grenades.   Xardas80

[a3] just nut up and playing like not like small girl   arif abaas

[d3] Man I want buy this bitch so bad but I gotta save my money for my upcoming trip FUUUCK

[b1][c5]   1:40 - Why don't they react to the 'sleeping' dude, wtf?!^^\n17:28 - and why is there a .. white static shadow of Jensen? o_O Is that a bug?   Tar vyn

[c6] It shows the police's last know location of Adam. MioRaem

[c6] No, the white outline was Adam's last known location to the enemy. So it tells you that the cops know where you are and you gotta motor :)   Waseem Ahmed

[c6] I think the shadow shows where the cops think Jensen is.
      Eckkitausnd

[a1][c1]   You should get a suppressor on your pistol. Also, love this series!   Johnny Dylan

[a4][c4]   i hope the game gets fixed. Found a game breaking bug further into the game -_-. Not gonna ruin anything for you christo or your viewers but it gets way more awesome than you probably think.
       Steven Anderton

[c5] Whatever happened to the woman whose admittance ID card (?) you couldn't unlock because you had to choose between her and another guy? Can you go back to her or is she already 'toast' by now? :/   Tar vyn

[a1] You can't put out episodes fast enough...I'm addicted !
      willynthepoorboys2

[c2] 32:23 'Chlupatí' is just a slang for Cops .. and about that name at 8:00 .. its 'Luboš', but it wouldnt be the first time that they have problems with 'ˇ'.   Diego Veka

[c3] Happy to have learnt something new anyways :) thanks   Violet

[d4] +Violet Yes it does .. but its also a slang for Cops from 70s or 80s ? OR something like that . I cant tell you more about it because I wasnt even alive those times =/   Diego Veka

[d4] ohh I did not know about the slang meaning, I thought it's just translated as 'hairy' Violet

[c1] Chris.... didn't you just get cloaking?? Didn't it seem like a good idea to use it during that laser grid section? That wasnt smooth at all.... Zeo1991

[c1] Use your cloaking more often. Getting detected would not have happnenned if you cloaked, Prima Italia

[c1] On the subject of the typhoon; i believe there's an upgrade for it which allows you to replace the deadly explosives with nonlethal knockout gas.   phantom99991

[d4] Yeah, I know, just clarifying a little bit so that there wasn't any confussion   Rafael Eisele

[c7] Point is, he may want to invest the praxis for the non-lethal in case of sticky situations in the future.   phantom99991

[c1] It isn't an upgrade per we, but when you unlock the typhoon it allows you to choose between the lethal and non-lethal version Rafael Eisele

[c1] USE YOUR CLOAK! ARUG! Chun Tong

[d4] I think you mean 'Use your cloak, Aug!'\nNice of you not to call him a clank though :P DuTogiraIkonoka

[c7] and here i though radich and koller were gay lovers; turns out he's just a low-key cyborg. phantom99991

[d4] This is true.   phantom99991

[d4] They could be that too for all you know lol   giabread

[b2] WUHU!!!   Atlas

[b1] 'shlupati' gave me cancer   Kalinmir

[c1] Chris you can cloak!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!1   Win Sarun

[d3] Is it just me or does the intro become smaller every video
       Illumi mango

[d4] I don't think it was supposed to be inspiring Dookus Maximus

[a3] Rhe longer version sounded dumb anyway. Supposed to be 'inspiring' or something similar, but it was just plain dumb.. Deuz

[d4] It does   Dycie Fisk

[d3] Now we no longer see those rad glasses :(Marc Shanahan

[b1] that desk was the best hiding spot ever Karol Rychlik

[b1] Oh wow the start tough :o haha   muslorman

[a1] yess thanks another great video!! I'm addicted   blank awx

[d3] Ninth!!!!!!Win Sarun

[c5] Did Chris ever confront Sarif?   lawoftheeast

[d4] +lawoftheeast You're welcome, Squigly. Cyanide and Happiness, if you're wondering.Teh Crust

[d4] +Teh Crust\nAh. Thank you, adorable talking butt person.
       lawoftheeast

[c6] He tried to. The option didn't appear on his television remote.
       Teh Crust

[d3] 7th lol   DeadKavaiol

[c2] EMP on the exo-suit cops... yessirChristopher Inglish

[d3] How dos this already have 4 likes? It's been 2 minutes. Justin
Smith

[d3] Noooooo, I though I was gona b first!   Justin Smith

[d4] +Larri Wright nice. ;) Justin Smith

[d3] i had plans to wake up early tomorrow, be productive n
shit.....well, that's out the window now lol. SK1PTER

[b2] yup yup!   Christopher Inglish

[b2] wooooo   matthewpinn4

FightinCowboy's "Nioh" Let's Play (Blind Run) – Episodes 8, 9 & 10 – "Deep in the Shadows"

[d4] lol I wish it was as simple as getting possessed by a harmless spirit to learn a different language at least Japanese and Chinese so that subbed anima wouldn't bug the shit out of me. dialingdust

[d1] This game is like Tenchu and Onimusha had a love baby   Hunter Of Hunters

[d1] nioh's combat is a lot easier to, tenchu was primarily a stealth only game. dialingdust

[c2] On walls, use gesture. If he doesn't like the one you use is eyes get angrier. Then use different color one to beat without fighting.   Zach Vinon

[b1] haha wall mimics..had to go one better than a chest trying to eat you.. DireSiren

[a1][c1]   The weapon your using,not the spear but um{i forget the name}is sick!! At first, i thought u were going for the double sword but the Weapons Gods proved me wrong lol luv the play throughs bruh!   solomngrundy

[c1] i dont get why you didnt try to use a different secondary if you didnt use the spear   Darryl Gibbs

[a1][c4]   Cowboy!! Missed you man I played along with you on dark souls 3 and bloodborne. I'm glad to see you are playing this. I randomly see a bunch of Nioh videos under one of my subscriptions and saw your name and it brought a smile to my face. I just beat the demon lady boss that shoots he paralyzing blasts and boy was she a pain in the ass. I like your helmet I must have missed it. I'll be playing along side you on my quest thru Nioh from here on out just like old times! Keep the videos coming !   DukeNukem777

[c5] How do u reset ur ninjutsu points Dragons Gaming Unite

[a3] you sure rely on parry a lot.. i hope i'll see u being more agressive in newer videos.. Widow Maker

[b2] 'sharuken' XD LOLNoahFan114

[d4] XDDD LAWL   NoahFan114

[d4] Everytime he says this, a young Asian is turned away from ninja school.   Caleb Tc

[b2] every time he says 'shee-roo-ken' by whole body curdles Shane Nugent

[a5] Honestly this game doesn't look to great. Even after it got finalized it still looks like crap. I'll prob buy it when the price goes down. For now doesn't look that appealing.   Matt D

[d4] ok Matt 'getz-tha' D   J Yar

[a3] man if you used the right *too* i would almost be willing to take you seriously. However considering your lack of understanding ill have to suffice to say, go fuck yourself.   Drew Russell

[d1] the voice is exactly Geralt's voice.   KL

[d4] Probably same voice actor   darkwzrd4

[a4] I should eat a sock. 21 episodes in a day and I thought you'd only put out 3-6.\n\nWell done my man. mellamohonas

[a1] badass   William Sanders

[d1] I really like this Witcher game!!! Patrick On Drugs

[d4] DukeNukem777 lol it's just a joke but I get what your saying. Especially the idiots who have all of a sudden started calling soul borne series crap or causal, just because a new game has come that's also good and uses a similar formula.\n\nIt's like shitting on mario 64 or metriod because someone took inspiration from them and made another great game. Grimmm1234

[d4] Patrick On Drugs so tired of the witcher jokes... team ninja is one of a kind. Don't take away from their hard work broskie   DukeNukem777

[c2] Just a heads up, you can gesture to wall mimics to avoid fights.   IsItBlissful ///

[c2] But the gesture type must be of the same type as the Wall Mimic's eyes. Malcom Alexander

[b1] 11:24 fightin cowboy gets DESTROYED LOL Grandmaster Buu

[a1][d1]   YOOOO!!!! I'm not ashamed to say I watched EVERY single dark souls 3 walk thru video cowboy put up as I played to beat that bitxh. Bruhhh!!! I aint buying this till u post a walk thru for this. Love the channel. Love the content. Salute.   chris issey

[c3] I watch all of them after playing myself to find out what I or he :D has missed   Wim Damen

[a5][d1]   haha i did that with scholar of the first sin because for some reason I was having problems with that game... but Not the whole thing, just til I got the hang of it... BUt with this game I am freaking LOVING it man its so deep and so badass.   Mitch H

[d1] this reminds me of shadow warrior 1   Grandmaster Buu

[a5] I need this game in my life ROSS MALCOLM

[d3] fuck Potato Jesus

[d3] 1st   Potato Jesus

[d3] Nigga the game isn't out yet how do you do dis   Celestial Riptide

[d4] Celestial Riptide he gets an early copy like alot of you tubers do with very high subs.   nathan rodriguez

[a1][c1]   you can use r3 to zoom with your bow, love your videos!   EdTheodoreLogan 1

[b1] Fucking bats, they got me.   Kaynos

[a2][c5]   You make game look easy! Is it easy as you play level up and get use to all menus? Sports Video Games

[c4] Yea those damn bats almost knocked me off the edge too... Thank God for those revenents to warn me people fell around that area lol   Jonathan Ngo

[a1][d1]   Nice game bro...I really enjoyed your Witcher3 series, that's what made me subscribe. I guess its time for honesty...seems like really fun game to play; yet the same side step, hack and slash, dominating the entire way (no fault of yours), got boring...had to jump to the bosses and the cut scenes on this one...still nice. Note: your commentary was good the entire way...   Friend

[d4] FightinCowboy how do yuo get those giant f bombs? Joni suonpää

[a1] +FightinCowboy Yes...still your channel is the best around...thanks! Friend

[s1] I feel you, kind of the nature with a game like this.   FightinCowboy

[b1][c4]   'People are getting wrecked here, I should check if there was anything else in the other cavern'. Bats, Bats knocking people off that ledge. That's what was wrecking them. Not speaking from experience or anything.... rhoadesd20

[a5][c4]   rhoadesd20 all my deaths in this level were due to falling. Such a crappy death mechanic imo. Lord Zuko

[d4] I feel your pain! :D   Wim Damen

[c4] I just ran past the guy guarding the shortcut and kicked the latter down. He followed down and I beat the shit of him.Rakim Turner

[b1] I love how at 12:39 you ran past the same kodama three times   bluemerc12

[c5] Why you so over leveled ?   Steve I

[c1] Ignore what level they say on the missions. Your armor/weapons will always be way lower level than your actual character. Running around at lvl 50 with lvl 25-30 weapons, lol. One optional sub area is a boss level 27, and he wrecks a level 50+ player. Nefrai Laysh

[c5] Is it? The overview said mission level 12?... But the thing is you probably did side-content.. That tends to get you overleveled.   tysej4

[s1] This is the level you should be at this point.   FightinCowboy

[c2] For anyone watching. You can bow to the wall and it will open without having to fight them.   wilcoerwin

[c3] I didn't know this...nice! But...that phat loot! lol   Nefrai Laysh

[c2] Well not quite. It's eyes will be one of three colors when it first looks at you (blue, yellow, or red). Perform any gesture with a corresponding color and it will go away.   rhoadesd20

[a1] You da real MVP Anthony Percy

[c5] Did he ever open that first door that was locked? CRIZAlf

[d4] Would u recommend this game to souls players? David Clarke

[a5] Disagree, Nioh is good but not even on the same level as Dark Souls KoenZyxYssel

[d1] Yes but it is not a souls game. It has some Ninja Gaiden-ish to it too.   Wim Damen

[d4] For the game lol Jay Polk

[d4] Mitch H that just made me horny   Jay Polk

[a5] as a diehard lover of all things soulsborne...... I can 100% say, this game is better.   Mitch H

[d3] 4   fabian rodriguez

[d3] 2nd ? Potato Jesus

[c4] :)) I don't think she is very hard, if you learn to parry her kicks. SHout attack always dodge-it is telegraphed by 2 sec. Umbrella attacks are a pain in the ass, but if you parry correctly you do devastating damage up close. Beat her on my second try, but fun boss. Not to say the same thing for the Jellyblob Umi thing.   Munteanu Catalin

[a5][d1]   I think the bosses in this game are harder than nearly everything From Software has done. In Souls I can beat bosses while still having a bunch of heals left, even on first playthroughs and when

I first started, but in Nioh I kill them when I have no heals and am like one hit from death, every time.   Descendant of Kraff

[c4] Man this boss kicked my ass at least 5 time's before i was finally able to put her down. That feeling of success was sweeet!   Micalmus The First

[b2] i wanna see you do all the ghost sword fight or what ever you call those sword with the red and black aura on them   Ken Nguyen

[c2] Ken Nguyen those are players who died in that spot so if he were to try to do that it would never end   Aldo Torres

[b1] 27:30 Did you fart?   AlphaWolvesGamer

[c4] I've been using heavy stance Axe and I must say its been working great for me.   Escanor Pride

[b1] 30:12 HAHA!! Punani!! BobZOMG1984

[d4] It is funny that people struggle on her. If you just slow down and pay attention to her she is so easy. I one shot this boss, to say she is broken is too good.   knightofgondor14

[c4] tHIS BOSS IS FUCKING KILLINGGG MEEEE I CANNOT BEAT HER EVEN WITH HELP PNW_PsilocybeJedi

[c4] Beat her on the 3rd try...she was a pain the ass tho. I ended up beating her with kusari-gama high stance. I kept her at a distance and kept using the heavy attack. I was down to my last elixir but after I got her health down to half, she was not able touch me since I kept running and dodging.   Craig N.

[b2][c4]   Love the game so far, but fuck I hate this stupid boss. Even summoning help die all the time   Fishy Frags

[b2] Missing 1 kodama. And then it is my turn getting killing by Hinoenma :) Wim Damen

[b2][c5]   Going crazy trying to beat this boss. Co-Op anyone? Chris Tuch

[c4] So i actually found a fairly easy way to fight her (see video on my channel), you basically attack her just as she is finishing her spinning attack, you can get great damage this way. Another thing is that if she is flying, run to the other side of the arena and once she flies to you - run beneath her, this will trigger her ground slam attack which makes her super vulnerable. Once you use this approach she is actually not that hard.   Adam S

[c5] she electric paralysis my ass, how do i fight that? Adam S

[s1] Avoid it. FightinCowboy

[c5] Do those bigger Yokai guys have a high resistance to poison? Doesn't seem you afflict that to them too often..maybe try fire?
     MTGPlayer10

[b2][c4]   THIS fn boss!!! Seriously for the level range of this zone seems a bit much. I can annihilate everything else in this area w/o issue. I know, I know... I'll be awaiting the 'git gud' b/s comments, but come on with this one. She's ridiculous! genXd4d

[c4] ok, at attempt 12 now and have not gotten her below half health. Can't abort mission to get new gear, don't have ochobo cup or whatever they are called, will be out of paralysis needles soon and then only have pills left...guess its git gud with dodging or I start from scratch....arrrghhh   Alexander Pietralla

[d4] done, thanks to falls a lot :)   Alexander Pietralla

[b2] This boss is a stupid cunt   Josh Davis

[d4] Josh Davis lol that made me smile. She is indeed.   Darren Steele

[c4] Just kicked her ass, thank you paralysis pills.   Uncle Death

[d4] All you guys that say this boss is hard etc. \njust wait till Tachibana Muneshige   MrTomkat030

[d4] Nathan Arrowsmith your welcome. But uh you could stay off YouTube until you've fancied your taste in the game. MrTomkat030

[d4] Always appreciate a spoiler! Nathan Arrowsmith

[c5] So just throw stuff at the boss?\nSounds fun Light Yagami

[d4] Light Yagami ikr Ghhh Hbbnnjbj

[c4] Rekt this biatch first try with 2 elixers left. that first boss Onryoki tough..he owned me like 20 times lol bamjam1

[c3] this helped me. I didn't think to use Shuriken or kunai on her when in the air. Thank you   TheBlackRoc

[c4][d1]   i play in heavy armor never died and never had a problem used alot of elixirs but thats all for me nioh is easyer than darksouls and bloodborne. EvilninjaSushi

[c4] took me 4 fucking tries. Fire paper was a life saver. I took all armor off and hit twice with dual katanas in mid stance and baited her combo, rinse and repeat. running to the side dodges her paralyzing attacks. This game has so much items, didn't even know I could cure paralyzing effect.   CrimsonAltar

[c5] What's the reason for his shuriken hitting 300 per shuriken? High Dex? lolking476

[c6] lolking476 yep   MrTomkat030

[c1] heavy armor is so hard to fight her in Andrew Anstrom

[d6] 10-1 \\o/ with help D: Wim Damen

[d6] Damn. 10th time. Hino-enma 10 Rinzewind 0. :-\\ I suck. Wim
Damen

[c2] There is a reason why you find archer gear just before this boss
fight :-D 'archer' so range battle on boss: bow, gun, bombs and kunai.
(says the man about to enter the boss fight for the 1st time D:) At
least the 1st monster after the shrine drops bombs alot D: Wim
Damen

[c3] This may be the best tip. I think that is my problem for this
boss because I can never dodge her in these big fucking boots and pants
lmao. display name

[c4] DBJ I sadly, have been getting rid of all my unoptimum gear to
earn elixirs ▢...I have the sellers remorse Andrew Anstrom

[c4] That boss though..... it took me at least 8 tries to even get her
down to half health. Then another 8 or so after that to finally finish
her off. I don't like that you can't go and buy more supplies without
quitting the mission though. By the end, I was out of fire and lighting
paper, as well as the anti paralysis stuff, so basically the only way I
could beat her was to not get hit. And I had her down to literally one
hit several times but then I mistimed a dodge, and bit it. Took an
hour, but I did it... and boy did it feel good.   The Grey Initiate

[b2][c5]   This boss is broken. What the fuck is this bullshit get hit
once and get stunned for 10 second and die. That is absolute bullshit
wtf am I supposed to do   tehCostHD

[c2] So Diesel: You can't get that spell until the second region, well
after you beat this boss.   Timothy E.

[c6] tehCostHD Dodge. Sideways. If your too heavy build you will be
slow try dodge in low stance Git Gud

[c6] get your magic and use the slow spell...   So Diesel

[c6] equip anti paralyses charms. Drew Russell

[c4] Yeah I beat it. Learned that running\u003edodging. Just run
around and you'll dodge every stunn attack and then bait her combos and
punish with 1 hit from my axe and then when she goes in the air dodge
and hit her with knives until she falls and then hit her a bunch. And
repeat and boom. Not tooooo bad once I learned the fight... that stun
is still bullshit though   tehCostHD

[d5] Damn! William aint gettin no waifu ass. Caleb Tc

[a5] This combat in this is really, really good... but it seems to have stolen the biggest BS artificial difficulty device in Dark Souls. The magically pirouetting enemies.... 4ngelicLotus

[b2] Fuck this boss. SFSix and 2

[d6] I died almost 30x fighting her   nyzmikey

[c2] lol you fight her like 4 times after this fight   komujimaru

[c4] nyzmikey see my video for easy way. Did it today. Adam S

[a5][d1][d6]   Damn, took me about 50 attempts! For the third boss, she is seriously tough, especially with only 5 elixir. If the difficulty curve only increases from here, it could be harder that DS or BB for sure! She's the first awesome boss in the game though, sexy but devastating! Nathan Arrowsmith

[a5][d1]   nyzmikey Same. She was harder than most bosses in DS   Brendan Fernandez

[b2] she's the worst! Mat B

[a5] The gameplay is just so close to perfect, at least for me...   Loose Cannon!

[c7] Just speculation but maybe the horns are indicators for the Oni-Strength. One-horned onis seem to give you way less trouble than that one 2-horned one.GunpowderCoffee

[d1] Ni-Oh yokai cyclops vs DS2 hippoclops: Who wins?   biohazard724

[d1] Executioners in Bloodborne   Supernova

[d1] Those hand beasts are a big fat plate of nope with a side of fuck that shit   Shawn Simpson

[d1] biohazard724 Both lose to DS3 Hand Beasts.... 4ngelicLotus

[d3] hippoclops because his bite force is way bigger. he can easily crush bones with his mouth. Ragnaroserino Kripperino

[d4] thats tough Loose Cannon!

[d3] mr dad long dick William Sanders

[c1] you shouldnt be greedy in such games   Potato Jesus

[c2] she isnt a vampire she is a succubus   Garl Vinland

[d4] Garl Vinland a succ is always appreciated   Roland Mcquire

[d3] Suck me   Cheese

Odd's "Nioh" Let's Play (Blind Run) – Episodes 7, 8 & 9 – "Deep in the Shadows"

[b1] Am I the only one who always thinks when he says that'll do it immediately reminds me of 'that'll do pig, that'll do.' Six

[d3] I wish I had this game   or at the very least a controller to use on my computer for my platformer/puzzle/fighting games I have =(..   Six

[c1] 17:20 Just in case, you know you can use items from the menu, you don't need to equip them to a hotbar slot first :) antione debusei

[c1] I know I'm kinda late on this but if you're mainly using the kuasarigama you should level up your dex seeing as it's a dex based weapon.   Yogie

[b1] 7:35...I like Mr.Odd ideas...(͡° ͜ʖ ͡°)   DX_Kidjal

[b1] A 'full frontal charge' may also be effective :)   Lars M. Hansen

[c5] What is the purple damage when he spins his axe   pizza dog

[a2] took him 7 episodes to finally fight the wraiths for the gear.. oh well better than never i guess Vimad

[b1] 'Troublematic' might just be one of my favorite words.   xxDarkSeer

[d1] I couldn't quite put my finger on it initially but there's something eerily familiar about the general vibe (just the vibe, not mechanics, story line, etc.) of this game. Something like a cross between the game Folklore and one other thing that's escaping me. Really fascinating game though.   missusCIRQUE

[c2] Those aren't birds, man! They're Bats lol   Roberto Candelária

[c2] Do they not have bats in Canada?? Those aren't birds ;_;   ruinationmkII

[d6] you missed the wall with eyes   Daniel Yap

[a1][c4]   I'm slightly ahead of you in nioh and loving your comments as you learn, it's pretty much the same thoughts I have as I progress in Nioh   Iain Clark

[c1] The Kurasagama throw and pull has a High Stance only version and a low/mid stance version. You probably got both. Both are good. I use low stance the most.   Jason Blanchard

[c2] Those 'birds' are very clearly bats haha ▯   Adam Voltz

[c5] Is it just my impression, or is axe about 50% more effective than the interesting weapon?   clickaccept

[c6] Chris just uses the interesting weapon wrong. Doesn't really use it's combos nor does he level it's stat.   devak

[b2] Where's part 8!!!!!   Billy Stanat

[c1] I was like why does kusarigama do no dmg at your game and then it clicked just if you didnt know the kusarigama scales with dex and you can fix it by buying the book from the blacksmith it doesnt cost much and with it you replace your lvl points Ilija Mandic

[c2] can't believe you missed the wall eyes lol - should of looked where the cat looked.   Also - birds in caves that squeak and hang from the ceiling are called bats. elevown

[b1] *Screeches* *Hangs down from the ceiling* *Screeches again* Chris: Oh hey it's a bird.   -_-   kyle liner

[c1] I am wondering why you keep putting points into skill and not as much into dex, as your main is your kusarigama which is B+ for dex and only C+ for skillKairyu & Mina

[c2] Birds, BIRDS, BIIIRRDSS??? They be bats. The zoological ineptitude is disturbingly strong in this one.   Herr Flick

[a1][c3][d1]   Hello I wanted to say I have enjoyed this gameplay walkthrough. One of my favorite is your witcher 2 gameplay. this has been really great information provided to me I do have the game, but I have miss a lot, so I will haft to start over again. Keep up the great gameplay.   William Riggs

[c2] I think those birds are bats :D   Rao Ku

[c2] 19:39 the dead says the wall has eyes, 19:50 the cat says the wall has eyes, you never looked at the wall on the right, in this game the illusory walls have black eye sockets, look closely and the eyes become orange and you have to fight the wall to open it. its a game mechanic, so they bothered to send you the cat to tell you, so you should check it out.   Miron 72

[d4] Spin to win Chris, Spin to win!   Taylor Flood

[d4] Those birds look funny.   4Minute saved me

[d4] _nanananana _*_Bird Man_*   svampebob007

[a1] oh boy I really like your videos mr odd, but please the pace is so slow.....anyway thanks for the content.   John Merrick

[c2] In this episode we learned that bats are birds.   Chris Geden

[b1][c2]   Chris: 'Man, these birds are a pain!'\n\nMe: 'Bats.'\n\nChris: 'These birds are really starting to get on my nerves!'\n\nMe: 'They're bats.' \n\nChrist: 'These birds really need to chill!'\n\nMe: 'They live in caves. They hang upside down from the ceiling. They're bats.'\n\n*near end of video*\n\nCat Spirit: 'This

looks like a bat cave.'\n\nMe: 'Thank god.'\n\nChris: 'So, we learned not to mess with those birds...'\n\nMe: ...\n\nXD kenjutsukata1o1

[c2] And they don't even sound like birds! They sound like bats! And I know what I'm talking about because I've seen/heard like a hundred of those in a tree a couple of weeks ago. DC Paradox

[d1][d4] If Ninja Gaiden taught me anything, it's that birds and bats are basically indistinguishable. And comprised entirely of hate.   schismtracer

[c2][d4]   Ikr? Those pesky birds! Always hanging upside down in caves for no reason. They must be plotting something, evil little effers. \nNot like bats. Bats are cool and cuddly. And they chirp. I love when bats chirp. EdgarTheRaven

[c2] ''birds'' no they are bats Chris Serhat Karabeyli

[c2] About Revenants: Red name revenants are NPC's placed by the devs white named ones are other players. I tend to kill all the red named ones and ignore the white named ones mostly. bamjam1

[c5] bamjam1 In your experience, how many of the red named revenants have dialogue upon death? I'm always looking for more memories of the deceased. Clutch Bert

[b2] i Just cant get enough of that flurry attack!!   Kevin Cox

[d1] another commenter down below mentioned the long dark... has that been suggested to chris before? it would be a great series   Kevin Cox

[c1] Just so you know Chris, investing in the spirit stat enables your guardian spirit additional passive bonuses apart from making your living weapon last longer and more damaging. Ardel Ocampo

[b1] Nekomata! Loving the lore   ammozz

[b1] Those bats were like, 'You mess with one of us, you mess with all of us!'\nBut I especially liked the part where you were possessed by Hello Kitty.   Essero Eson

[a1][d1]   Hey Chris. Love all the videos! If you ever get the chance check out the long dark game. Would love to see a video series on that one! MyForce IsInYou

[d4] na na na na na na na na BIRDMAN   The LostShoes

[c2] 'Those birds' look very much like bats. Tiago Marques

[a5] One of the greatest games ever made   Mars 1184

[d3] Save early, save often :P   darkether

[a1] Great to see another upload. Thanks for continuing this series man   KPChaps

[b1] 4:32 'Okay we totally entered Japanese video game territory'. You are not quite there yet, you have yet to go to the dark side of the video game territory. song kwong yi

[d1] Mr. O what happened to XCOM 2 The Long War 2 Let's Play?   JavierRey Katzenstein

[a2] Thank you so much for fighting one of the revenants Jamie

[c2] There will be bodies around this level, with items hovering over them, that seem inaccessible in this level. Make sure to listen to the cat about the walls having eyes...Patrick Rivas

[b1] That cutscene with the cat had me rolling   IThe AuthorityI

[c1] Your paralysis charm has Amrita sense. That plus hat means both senses!   Niels Schellekens

[d5] if you have to choose between the two Daimyo choose Ieyasu the true shogun of Japan!! Rasvahn Gul

[d1] is the main character of nioh related to the main character of the witcher 3?   tuska20000

[c1] press square to use item in the menus... you don't have to equip them into your quick slot then use them. Also... lucky you on funding a +20% drop item so early in the game, those are extremely rare Krymore

[c1] You should just loot everything and decide what to keep at the end of the mission. Frequent changes in gear in the same mission are trivial for your success in it.   Yrelion

[c2] Odd, you lost a secret door in that spot that the cat told you: 'the walls have eyes; come back to there please   Asaph Ferreira

[a2][b2]   You play like a pro, more videos please Asaph Ferreira

[c1] Since your main weapon, Kusarigama, does not get any benefits from strenght needed for the axe you might want to reconsider your secondary. You have lots of skill, so 2x swords or a spear can be decent choices. Hargrovius

[c2] Man, how high are you to call bats birds?   Abelion Varthe

[d4] Abelion Varthe Let's just says they are birds made of darkness, eh   Unruly Crow

[d6] That wall had actual eyes!   Thomas Hughes

[c2] calling bats 'birds' triggers me :)   Robert Kopczak

[d4] Robert Kopczak okMaran Gozi

[d1] Will we have the of Spec Ops The Line soon????   Florent Billard

[c2] Chris please stop backing into new areas while fighting opponents. You're just creating problems for yourself by pulling more enemies towards you.   Ognjen Jokovic

[c2] also maybe avoid fighting enemies on ledges, especially multiple enemies   Kevin Cox

[b2] Bats...   Johnny w

[c1] mate your weapon scales by dexterity. I know you probably have not seen these comments since you record in batches but just in case I am reminding you.Drew Horton

[c1] The best thing is that dexterity also increases his ninjutsu capacity, so he can have more shuriken, powders and poisons equipped.   Juan Ignacio Cavestany

[c1] Basically, whatever stat your weapon is tied to, will increase the damage of the weapon based on that stat's level.\n\nFor example, since the kusarigama is a dexterity based weapon, the higher your dexterity, the more damage you will do with a kusarigama. Other stats might increase your damage slightly, but dexterity will give the biggest boosts. It tells you in the description on the level up screen which weapons scale with which stat (I believe heart, for example, is swords).   kenjutsukata1o1

[c5] Drew Horton how does scalding work? I'm new to these games   Liam James

[c2] When the cat spirit said the walls have eyes he was referring to this games version of an illusory wall. It opens up if you use the right colour gesture. Revenant graves around the wall give hints at what kind of gesture to use. (You need to be close enough to the wall for it to open it's eyes)   Kongou Seki

[c6] Alex Deva every wall I've ever opened was with a gesture. You get two chances with each wall and a revenant death text will usually say 'crushed to death for their [type of gesture] behaviour'. So if you find a single revenant hint it's a guaranteed no fight. Kongou Seki

[c5] Kongou Seki Really? I just attacked the wall and killed it, I didn't know you could use gestures too. Alex Deva

[c2] If you have time go back to the palce where the cat said the walls had eyes and explore that room, search for the wall you may get a surprise XD Nacho Botella

[b1] Nacho Botella that part genuinely creeped me out xD Jade Lowe

[d1] Damn, Geralt sure did change his fighting style.   Sarah

[d4] +louisgworld: Lol, true!   Cagnazzo

[d4] Yep, he's actually a competent swordsman now. louisgworld

[c2] The eyes in the wall are real!   Markus Scheucher

[a1] Been waiting for this the whole day!!! That anime-like feel to it is intense!!! Keep up the good work!!! Civz 80

[c2] It is superstition that it is possible to telle the time by looking at a cat's eyes, thus cat-clock Francesco Gulisano

[c2] Chris, ya might wanna go back to that room where they were talking about the walls having eyes. No spoilers, but there was a reason there was a ton of bloody graves hanging around there. Xin Guan

[c2] Another fun fact about the tankuki in the mimic chests: that thing they're wearing on their heads? It's not a hat, and it's not their tail. It's their ball sacks.   kenjutsukata1o1

[c4] Xin Guan yeah I heard that with the Mimick chests that your emotes can actually interact with them and so I absolutely loved when that wall responded to my bow   pizza dog

[c2] Xin Guan and one more thing Chris, that very low toned 'Hmmmmm' you probably heard when you were fighting in that room wasn't coming from the revenant.   ARCAGNELL0

[c4] Oh... right... well, we'll see then XD\n\nHonestly, I forgot the return amulets were even a thing. If I hadn't gotten into the area through the hidden exit, I think I would have spent an embarrassingly large amount of time pulling my hair out trying to figure out how to get back before I remembered the amulets existed. kenjutsukata1o1

[c3] Not unless your like me and just used the travel amulet in the place your talking about and didn't figure it out until I saw someone else do it and facepalmed. The Salty Dob

[a5] It would be great if the game recorded the revenant combats and if your revenant won you got the opportunity to watch it.FullOfLethons

[d4] It would also further the 'meaning' of the Harakiri sword if you couldn't watch battles that ended in suicide Eins

[b1] 'We've totally entered Japanese video game territory' - Christopher Odd, 2017\nBest quote I've heard this year. Kongou Seki

[b1] 'I've got these 'birds'.' - ChristopherOdd ,2017   Richer ofpoorlings

[d4] Unruly Crow haha!Kongou Seki

[d4] Kongou Seki Oh no you really edited your comment! I should have added a smiley to make mine look more mellow! lD   Unruly Crow

[d4] parallel thought...   Ze Great Pumpkinani

[d4] Kongou Seki * ChristopherOdd 2017 Unruly Crow

[c1] Soul Match is to increase a weapon's level to the level of anouther weapon while retaining the weapon's abilities. Prima Italia

[a1][a2][d1]   Did I ever mention that I love watching you explore new games? Dark Souls and XCom are quite okay, but you can (and probably do) play those in your sleep. But when you set your slightly twisted mind to finding out how a new games works, mastering things at first go or failing to understand them for days on end... I like that. It's a whole new level of involvement. Okay, mostly shouting at the screen, but also astonishment and fun! Julia Maluca

[a1] I've been waiting for this all day. Glad to see you uploading Chris, and thank you for all the amazing work!   vioeugen

[a1][c2]   I'm glad to see another episode. This game is really awesome. And if the grave has a lot of purple rare items and it isn't too high level you should definitely take it on to get some really great armor and weapons.   JackOfAllBlades

[c2] When demons run out of stamina (their bar goes red) they can still act, but any attack will stun them. So when they're out of ki you can wade in with a big combo and keep them stunlocked for a bit.   antione debusei

[b1] fav part 19:24   GOAT

[a3] 'well i guess they are bats, i dont know' dude i like you but not know that those are bats is really stupid   Alex Morton

[a2] Christopher The Tunel Vision is back :'D   greiwer

[a1][a4]   Longer videos my friend Please! Love your style though brother!!! I've bought games based on your walk through... great commentary as well btw   Always. 𒐫𒐫𒐫   Billy Stanat

[c2][d3]   ((31:50))\nYou shot off his horns, dude. That's why he fell and was temporarily weakened. \n\nP.S - What the fuck is with Japanese companies and refusing to release any of their games on PC?   James Moose

[d4] Damn birds! TheGundrax

[c3][d1]   I just realized the enemy's tracking isn't as op as in dark souls.   metalperslfx

[c4] Timothy Putranto yeah for this boss I just kept running serpentine until she finished a move and then I'd get a hit. She almost always missed XD pizza dog

[a1] Great video man , can you speak about nioh in Pc . Horacuo Fontes

[b1] 32:32 sick combo xD   bamjam1

[c5] Why the fuck is he ignoring all revenants?   M. Mitcher

[c5] Doesn't activating the living weapon a second time do a special attack? Because I only see Chris activate it once and then use regular attacks.   DeafMuteProdigy

[c6] DeafMuteProdigy I think you need to get a perk to do thatpizza dog

[c1] You know you can destroy these youkai portals with your arrows?   Chaoswind55

[a1] Otimo video ! Boa sorte ! Great vid !   William Waterloo

[c2] Odd try shooting the big guys horns before you fight themMaitham Suad

[b1] ki pulse! Markus Scheucher

[c2] Don't forget that if you have enemy under you (you always try use bow to kill them), don't forget you have that drop attack, which could kill them. Tomáš Drábek

[d1] the Spy Kusarigama is basically the equivalent of Wands and staffs from dark souls. Casual weapon that everyone uses, and I mean EVERY one. (Atleast people that I've seen)   They Told Me I Could Become Anything, So I became an Eggplant

[c1] Hargrovius That will be the reason why people use it, it's not a very common weapon to say the least. Another reason is it scales with dex and so many plays as ninja. Omnyo ftw imo.\nIt does have some ridiculous hit counts though, eats through enemy stamina like crazy...but after so many revenants with it, i can counter it blindfolded, then grapple and done. Long windups for attacks.   AkumaReiji

[c3] Well, I'd also choose the Kusarigama becouse I have never heard of it and it seems intriguing how it works. IRL it must be hell to use effectively, though.   Hargrovius

[c4] I agree, every bloody revenant i fight, either kusarigama or in rare cases, low stance sword.   AkumaReiji

[a1][c1][c2]   The horns are actually breaking, and that seems to be when they lose all their stamina from one hit.\nAlso, remember you got

a healing move with the kusarigama!\n\nThanks for this fun lets play!
    Rafa Martinelli

[d5] always tell a girl to stop ' nioh spelled backwards' around,ya
dig!?!?   Intoodeep Forsleep

[c1] It looks like you have possibly gotten a lot of titles, so you
might want to see if they have unlocked any more of those stat boosts.
Also, it looks like when check a grave it will show the items you can
possibly get (the circle of items on the left side of the marker) so if
you see a grave with a ton of purple items it might serve you well to
go ahead and fight them.   Dark Holt

[c1] hey odd u can use the block button to sneak up on your enemies the
lonely ghost

[c2] With the walls with eyes, if you use gestures in front of them,
they will open, so far i've used bow and taunt   Freakyfelon

[c2] 35:31 Revenant with 6 purple items. Lastly, try to break their
horns if you can with a bow and arrow. It makes the demons easier to
fight or stuns them   Michael Lim

[c2] Oh and before you reach the Boss there is one Kodama in a cave
above the Cyclops before the Boss fight!   Rasvahn Gul

[c2] When the big guy belly flops hit hit him head on and you might
knock off the horn.   Connor Butler

[c1] The game will tell you when you have gotten all of the Kodamas on
each mission. So don't take the Kodama sense hat off until it tells you
so.   Adam Stilber

[c1] chris, seriously. your living weapon mode makes you temporarily
invulnerable while it's on IT WILL SAVE YOUR LIFE   Ashen Imago

[c1][c2]   If you are teetering on the edge of a fall, dash away from
it to save yourself :) Also - check out your passive spirit guardian
bonuses under the swap spirit option in shrines - you REALLY should
level up your spirit stat to 10 or so to get them all- they really
help! elevown

[a5][c1]   This game has way too much inventory fluff. The fighting is
great and builds a lot on Souls type play, which is the game's real
strength, I think. FYI, I think you could use your living weapon a lot
more often - it recharges really fast when beating enemies. Cheers and
good luck in Yokai land Odd. :)   LuckyLoremaster

[c1] I wouldn't call it fluff, you can craft equipment from raw
materials, combine your items to increase the gear you like more's
level and stats, and even add new bonuses entirely or upgrade raw
materials to better quality, and any gear you don't want after all that
can be offered to a shrine in bulk by a few possible categories of
rarity or familiarity, giving the gear system a LOT of customization

and flexibility once you start crafting your own gear. And as Odd is showing, you don't NEED to do all of that to progress, but a bit of crafting if you're stuck somewhere can help a lot. TheLastLiving1

[c2] When you're teetering on an edge due to bats dodge away from it. Come on man, don't just take it :DWink784 PS4

[b2] C'mon Chris, I wanna see you use some swords!!   AJ Kolawole

[c1] Try to keep your armor encumberance at least in the green colour. You are using way too much stamina at the moment to fit your playstyle, Odd. Aleksanteri Sumiloff

[b1][c2]   35:31 Revenant with 6 purple items. ಠ_ಠ   Timaeus91

[a2] Thats Chris for ya. His tunnel vision is back guys, he lost it in RE7. Sarah

[b1] Timaeus91 and he doesnt even fight it ¡-¡   Tristan Blommers

[c2] Don't drop items you can use them on the....Blacksmith....WHERE'S THE BLACKSMITH? Rasvahn Gul

[c4] Yeah, the kunai are nice, I finished off onryoki with 3 of them cuz I had no heals   Ze Great Pumpkinani

[c2] If you bow to the wall, with the bow gesture, the wall monster moves aside to let you in.   FiredBoy

[c2] FiredBoy It's not always a bow.\nYou'll occasionally find graves with the cause of death as: 'Crushed by Nurikabe for Polite(blue)/Neutral(yellow)/aggressive(red) behaviour.'\n\nThe Nurikabe will respond to one of the other two coloured emote types. Peacefully dealing with them goes towards the Yokai Telepathy trophy. ^_^   pitchdark5

[d1] I hope someday they make half-life 3 and you will play it just like the old days ... Hasan Polat

[d4] Sarah When Trump gets crowned Emperor, he'll make Gabe do it, or else he'll be sent to the other side of The Great Wall. Heimrich Müller

[d4] +Sarah: But I actually wanted Half Life 3 to come out :(Cagnazzo

[d3] Half Life 3 comes out when Trump gets his second term.   Sarah

[c1] There are ninja locks and samurai lock, they are for each skill respectively. :) Anime Crazy

[b1] 5:00 IS HE MIMICING MY PLAYTHROUGH??? I killed that same wall with the same weapon standing in the same spot lol Ze Great Pumpkinani

[c2] lack of variation when attacking demons, use your Ki glimpse, try to not lean back so often.   Ajie Adhazi

[c1] Chris, try different weapons. It doesn't really matter which you chose at the start and when you unlock skills, it unlocks them for all the weapons. You may find a different weapons better than others   Tom Robinson

[c2] Mr. Odd. If you are ever about to fall off a ledge (when William is hanging on with one foot and flailing his arms) you CAN dodge in any direction during that. So push your control stick towards safety and dodge in order to regain your footing. Sparda

[d3] Damn im quick   Wolf Van den Zegel

[c2] By the way, you can use gestures to get the doors to unlock themselves...   Krymore

[d4] They're not bats they're beat-boxing mice.   Indyo Wells

[d1] Odd, have you played Kingdoms of Amalur: Reckoning? It's a similar game to Nioh and Dark Souls, single player ARPG. It has an amazing story written by Salvatore same guy who writes the Forgotten Realms novels.\nI think you would really enjoy playing it :)   Décio

[b2] The male enemy npc death noises on that game crack me up.Devin Walters

[c2] if you bow at the wall shouldn't attack you.. it normally bows back and disappears.   Lola Anthony

[c2] The walls are looking for a specific 'flavor' of gesture, blue yellow or red. By looking at nearby graves you can get hints on what are the wrong answers. antione debusei

[c2] No no, what you have to do is use gestures that match the eyes. Atleast thats what I've heard. Cause when I did that, it got pissed.
     They Told Me I Could Become Anything, So I became an Eggplant

[c2] Another tip would be to tell him to look at the graves in front of the wall and see how they died. Bowing doesn't always work. If you use a gesture and it angers the wall to the point of attacking. you should let it kill you because it will leave a revenant that says something along the lines of 'Crushed by Nurikabe for his X behavior' and the behavior part of the text will always be colored the same color of the gesture you used that angered it. Other people have started doing this so always check revenants in front of them. It also adds to the 'different types of death' death counter if you die to it after pissing it off with a gesture.   The Salty Dob

[a1] I bought this game because of your playthrough! It's such a great game, definitely worth the buy! Keep up the great work Odd, I absolutely love your Vids man!!   T Garcia

[b1] 'I'm the one true rock thrower' - Christopher Odd, 2017 Kongou Seki

[c7] 4:20 Who wants to bet the first youkai was there as a distraction, to throw people off the actual threat in the room?   ray30k

[c3] ray30k yeah, I've been very thorough in my play through but I did miss that. pizza dog

[b2] Thank god; I was beginning to suffer from Nioh withdrawal.   Sultan

[a5] I think you have convinced me to cancel my order. It's just a fight game after all. Sadly, I'm disappointed but glad you're enjoying it. Michele R

[d4] For what it's worth, I think know what you're saying, and I agree.   PsychadelicoDuck

[d1] The Salty Dob just wanted to reply to you because we share a love for demon souls. the first time I got that game was because there was a knight looking guy on the cover and I had no clue what it was or how it was played. needless to say I died to the first boss that you fight right off the bat and kept restarting like 20 times, got pissed and didn't touch the game for another year until I learned what it was lmao. Always will remember that game fondly Apocalypse1377

[d1] Dark souls is a even further dumbed down fighting game though....I really don't understand what you mean by what you saying. Dark souls has had fighting game mechanics in it since demon's souls. If you play dark souls for anything other then combat initially then your playing it for the wrong reasons. Literally almost no one picks up those games and starts reading items without being told to, watching somebody else or doing a second playthrough because they loved it and got more curious about things and went 'oh shit this game actually has plot'. Nioh is a third person action JRPG with diablo loot elements. Dark souls is a third person action JRPG with 80% of the JRPG removed from it and heavily focus'd on the combat and experience of overcoming the games many trials for any video game player. Demon's soul's will always be my favorite souls game for that reason. even though I love bloodborne as well.   The Salty Dob

[d1] were you expecting it to be a top down strategy game?\ndafuq?\n\neveryone says that it's comparable to Dark Souls, what made you think otherwise?   AJ Kolawole

[d1] +Michele R Nioh's essential aspects are its difficulty and its fast-paced combat based on exploits and ki management. This is Bloodborne. It has many differences, such as the item system, which is why I love it as opposed to just liking it. No, it isn't a copypaste of Dark Souls/Bloodborne like Salt and Sanctuary was, but denying where the idea for Nioh sprouted from is ignorant. Marc Shanahan

[c4] Those sword and axe wielding Yokai, I read em like an open book. It's easy to predict their attacks once you memorize their attack pattern and got used to em   Star Wars :Rouge One

[b2] I was watching part 7 and I was gone then I was like 'What's next?' then PART 8   Jacob Wilkins

[a1] Woot, First!\nLove your vids keep it up Krymore

[c2] So many missed drop attack opportunities when running back from the 3rd shrine ;-;   antione debusei

[a5] This is an amazing boss and Boss fight! Cid Homer Imperial Pneulemen

[c7] i was thinking maybe since this boss is like a vampire type boss that maybe it might be weak to fire or somesort of holy type dmg but just a thought haven't played the game yet so i have zero knowledge in what is in the game lol   the anime gamer

[c4] Took me like 50 attempts to beat her. Mostly due to my poor reaction. But of course the fact that I stubbornly refuseing to leveup both my character and weapon skills and not using gear to counter stuff like paralysis adds some difficulty as well. xD   MadeofBlackIce

[c2] Please do all the sub missions! I really think you'd benefit from doing them. Northern Tempest

[a5] This game actually has a chance to make me into a console peasant.   ZShalafi

[c2][d1]   Just a tidbit- I'm pretty sure the 'Anjin' achievement is a nod to James Clavell's Shogun.\n\nIt's about a English pilot that gets to Japan on a Dutch ship in the 16th century - after the death of Nobunaga but before Tokugawa shogunate was established - a bit stranded he manages to get himself embroiled in the beginnings of the civil war. Playing a vital important role no less. - KoperKat

[c2] Keep calm and wear Archer Garb (Respect !! Bitch took me about 25 tries)   HanzsKlopek

[a5] WOW... this boss fight is the exact reason I don't play or like these types of games. You get 2-shot by the boss while it takes you forever to kill them. Emir Escalante

[c2] Apart from the first cat spirit, I think they're going down the 12 Chinese Zodiac animals. So far, a cow, a dragon and a rabbit.   ammozz

[b2] The bunny-spirit girl has some thick legs.   shannonsp2

[b2] I love how every time you die and respawn at the shrine the Kodama's are all throwing a party for you XD 'Yay he died again!'   Kathryn Free

[d1] That boss fight gave me flashbacks of Alma from Ninja Gaiden. I think I'm still scarred from fighting her.   entropist65

[c5] I wonder if 'Anjin' was a nod to Shogun or an out right theft?   fatherjimbo

[c6] What? Anjin-san is what the main characters name was in Shogun once he got to Japan. fatherjimbo

[c6] It's his historical japanese name.Daton Kallandor

[c2][d1]   fatherjimbo I thought the same when I saw it come up. The game follows the Shogun story quite closely apparently. Benjibear Day

[c1] Maybe switch out the axe for swords? Could be a fun way to experiment without losing your main weapon   Jordan Shiveley

[b1] Really no mentions about the new girl with the bunny spirit??? My fellow youtube dwellers, you are not doing your job!   Chris DarkCloud

[d3] Canadian ? don julio

[d1] She reminds me a little bit of Nevan from DMC3, both are also super cool boss fights.   4Minute saved me

[b1] 'what can we use to avoid paralysis'\n\nlooks and antiparalytic needle\n\n'nah' Ian Costa

[c1] By the way, once your living weapon is activated, you can hit circle and triangle while it's active to have whatever spirit do damage. You should try doing that Ian MacLagan

[d3] And again this masterpiece is not on pc... Japan, i love you and all but really now you should know more than most that we have evolved. People have PC for gaming in 2017 can we just forget about this stupid fucking boxes and shit and actually make games for PC? #MakeJapanGreatAgain   Shadow86

[b2] I don't know why, but I was expecting more from the one boss they put in the trailer for this game. Adam Stilber

[d5] That the only thing wen save those fuckers come back   Manny Rivera

[c1] unlock sloth to make the boss fights much easier   woodypvf1

[a1] Great lets play mr odd hkewell77

[a5] I'm on the 3rd region but I'm loving this game get out and buy it people   hkewell77

[c5] Anjin? Are they going sort of based on the 'Shogun' novel?   Zina Koziner

[d4] huh, I didn't know it was a real based story Zina Koziner

[c6] Zina Koziner The names are all actually inspired from history. William Adams was an English man who ended up in Japan on the same ship as mentioned in the first episode. When he learned Japanese and got all cozy with Tokugawa Ieyasu (who liked the foreigner), Tokugawa insist that he be called Anjin 'something'. I forgot the other part, but his name meant 'pilot of the (ship he arrived in)'. I also forgot that :d\nI can't vouch for the historical accuracy of the yokai, but I like how the story is panning out.   SpecArch96

[c1] Chris the Summoner's Candle is used to call back your Guardian Spirit and Amrita when you die so that you don't have to run all the way through the level to get it. Adam Voltz

[b2] Me everytime i see kodama (~^^~) Mortex

[d1] Soooooo..... Has Odd forgotten about long war? I means it's been a week since we last got a episode. Anyone else miss it? Just me?   Patrick Winfield

[a1][c1]   Agility means how much free weight you have Chris.... if you press option when you're looking at your stats it'll tell you what Agility means. So if you're at 25% equipment weight it'll give you quite a bit of damage. \nAlso as a Ninja, you might want to wear light gear and have as much mobility as possible. because your weapon doesn't provide much block or parry like a spear or axe does. \nBut hey, I guess whatever floats your boat XD. Looking forward to your next video.   Krymore

[c1] Please change axe to a sword. that's would be more interesting   Kibou Wanderer

[b1] Damn, they at least could have offered William a bath and a shave before the party...   Julia Maluca

[d4] What happened to your Dark Souls battle cry of 'EAT...DICKS!'?!   Decoherent

[d4] Now it's:\n'KURAE... CHINCHINTACHI!'   EdgarTheRaven

[b2] I love how different people have trouble with different bosses. \nI killed this one first try and tough she was really easy.\nThe next boss tough.. goddamn he was tough.bamjam1

[b2] All the spirit animals in this game look so cool! Tylerb284

[c2] Sub missions are good, a bit more levels and loot are always welcome. They also re-use the map, recycle it and put you in different starting positions. Not only that, they pit you against enemies that you haven't seen before and lets you familiarize yourself when fighting them in future Chris. Ian Chapman

[a2][c1] [c2]   Hey Odd, nice boss fight. You did pretty damn good, considering how bad you got wrecked the first round!\n\nAnyways, switching weapons isn't nearly as big a deal in Nioh as it is in the Souls games. The only thing that you can fall behind in is unlocked abilities, but it's not too hard to earn Samurai Points.\n\nAlso, the sub missions are totally worth it. Besides the mission rewards, you get Amrita from enemies, and gear drops from enemies and chests. You can find some really good stuff in sub-missions. They're shorter, too.\n\nSome of them also have supplementary story tidbits after you beat them, so you'll be missing out on some lore if you ignore them.
      kenjutsukata1o1

[b2] Well have fun with the boss after the next one lets say hes ten times worse Antonio Osorio

[b2][d1]   I know from watching Chris play Dark Souls/Bloodbourne, and playing them myself, that when a boss kills him multiple times, said boss is very, very difficult. I'd venture to guess Nioh is no different and can't wait to play it myself. KPChaps

[a1][d2]   I'm really loving your playthrough of Nioh! I play it on my channel too, but I still enjoy seeing your videos Odd!   LazyJuice

[c2] When you fight yokai try using your ki damaging items more often
      Raymond S

[b2][d1]   All I could think of in the first part of the fight was the DBZ Abridged moment with Piccolo and Gohan... 'DODGE!!'\nPretty scary to see how fast this crazy lady can take you down if you are defensive thats for sure XDTripleGlitch

[a2][c6]   I'm pretty proud of you, Chris. So many other youtubers/people on forums are complaining about how unfair Hino-Enma is, but you just calmly figured out what you needed to do to win, and did it without blaming the game.\n\nOn an unrelated note: Your question about the 'Call Back Guardian Spirit' function where you lose all your amrita. That's because you lose all the passives your guardian spirit provides when you've got a grave out in the world. So if you're in a tough area and you absolutely need your passive bonuses, you call back your spirit and sacrifice the amrita.   Amethyst End

[d2] lol Shirrako beat her first try , what channel are you watching , she is easy as hell   Mr.RedpandaTM

[c1] Amethyst End i love how you can get the sloth omnyo magic that thing is soo strong you can beat any boss super easy so complaining is a dumb thing if you have that   Ilija Mandic

[c2] She isn't even that difficult. Equip a spear and when she rushes at you, do one or 2 hits and step back. Repeat.\n\nI do think Onryoki is kinda bullshit tho and he didn't even killed me that many times. The timing to dodge the spin attack up close is insane and when he enters phase 2 his iron balls follow you. ex: you get up close and as soon as

he is gonna throw them, you dash behind him yet the the ball magically
defies nature and shoots backwards and kills you.   Jose Luis Mendez
Silva

[d4] agreed   Clockwork Angel

[c2] Do the sub missions! They are super short missions and worth the
experience and loots. Chris Alvarez

[d5] Siru Wirrian-samaKomradeCPU

[c1] Press R2 to compare equipped Stephen Ward

[b2] kodama - as loud as they're cute   O MEGA TESTER

[c1] So... did Odd ever figure out that Antiparalytic Needles, um,
cure paralysis? Michael Ramon

[c1][c2]   This boss specifically is super weak to shuriken when in the
air. Its great if you can't quickscope her with the bow confidently.
ALso if you just want to bow her. my best tip would be don't put the
bow away to dodge. just press the dodge button with the bow out.
putting the bow away by releasing L2 will actually put your character
in a animation you can't dodge out of. but if you just hold it and
press dodge then let go. you won't get that delay. The Salty Dob

[c1] The problem is that paralysis would suggest you can't use items.
But you can totally use the needles while paralyzed to instantly remove
it. Salt is also pretty useful against yokai bosses.   BYToady

[b1] Love it how he read the last half of the paragraph, but not the
first half.xelasneko

[b1] Dude I go crazy when his tunnel vision kicks in! He was like
'Antiparalytic Needles ...cures a variety of ailments... Nope'. hahaha
     Rafa Martinelli

[b1] That was so goddamn funny and frustrating at the same time.
\n\n'I need something to help against paralysis. Antiparalytic
needles? Hmmm... Nope.'   kenjutsukata1o1

[b2] first real boss hard af   Ronell Marshall

[a2] It's ok Chris, she's one of the stronger bosses in the game
because of her speed   Krymore

[b1] 'am I interrupting' I had to pause the video to laugh at that
one...   Ze Great Pumpkinani

[b1][c1]   'we should prep for paralysis.'\n\nThe game gave you several
anti-para objects right before the boss, Odd. Yes, you should've seen
that coming.   Titanium Ursa

[c2] Remeber to use Gestures to Walls and Mimics! Rasvahn Gul

[d4] SPOILS but I digress, it's a pretty obscure way to deal with
them. The mimics are cute though! Ze Great Pumpkinani

[d4] don't worry she's not molesting the corpse. You just interrupted
her feeding time that's all. Mynx Mellon

[d4] Ze Great Pumpkinani this comment should ONLY be takes out of
context. :-D   Jeremy Rhynes

[d4] this message shouldn't EVER be taken out of context Ze Great
Pumpkinani

[d1] She reminded me of the pursuer from ds2, my first souls game.
Pretty much the first boss in the game that says 'You better understand
how the mechanics work in this game..'. This was before i knew about
the ballistas of course.   revocation3x

[c1] You call back the Guardian Spirit from your grave so you can
charge your living weapon. If your Guardian Spirit is at your grave,
you can not charge your living weapon. Agility is the statistic that
measures your rolls and dashes. It depends on how much your armour
weighs. It is in the top right in the equipment screen. There are four
levels of Agility, Over 100%, Between 70% and 100%, Between 30% and 70%
and lower than 30%.   Prima Italia

[d1] I still fail to see why people compare it to souls series when
neither combat nor art look anything like it. Any captains here?
     C9H13Nergal

[d1] After playing Sigma to the death, NG2 felt way too easy for me so
I had to skip it. It also changed the game considerably. I strongly
recommend you go check Sigma or Black out. Exellent game. Maybe then
you understand what I'm referring to.   Aleksanteri Sumiloff

[d1] DS did not invent the wheel indeed ^^.\nIt invented a genre, or a
sub-genre i should say, and nioh falls perfectly into it.\nNever played
NG Sigma, so i can't tell about the animations, but based on my own
experience with the game i'd say its 70-80% DS and 20-30% NG2. And i'm
loving it. Federico Montieri

[d1] Well stupid amount of the attack animations are clearly imported
from Ninja Gaiden Sigma. Thats pretty clear for the naked eye.\n\nAlso
Sigma had very similiar save system. DS didn't invent the wheel.
     Aleksanteri Sumiloff

[d1] I only played ninja gaiden 2 but i feel nioh is not so much like
it. Asian-japanese focus, of course, cool dismembering of the
opponents on death, and combat skills that you have to learn. It has NG
features for sure, but again the foundation on wich the game is built
is clearly DS.   Federico Montieri

[d1] You could make the similiarity argument to Ninja Gaiden.\nDark
Souls is just so much more popular than Ninja Gaiden was, so most of
the people comparing this to Souls have no idea that the same company

produced NG before they made Nioh.\n\nP.S. NG is much older game than Souls Aleksanteri Sumiloff

[d3] Straw Poll: Hino-Enma!\n\n1) Would you tap that? (Yes/No)\n2) If yes, would your inevitable death at tapping it be worth it? (Yes/No)\n3) If no, fapping to her memory appropriate or inappropriate? (Yes/No)\n4) Do you think Odd would tap that? (Yes/No)   LuckyLoremaster

[d3] FOUR NEGATIVES, NOW BE PURGED, HERETIC! Hargrovius

[d3] Yes, yes, no, and maybe.   ColonialFungus

[d3] i would double tap that ass anytime   Pablo Ferrito

[d3] I'm gonna have to go with no across the board with this one. However, later on in the game, there miiiight be a boss or two I'd say yes to...   kenjutsukata1o1

[d3] LuckyLoremaster dude odd is married. xD Yuyuka8

[c2] you should do the submissions just for the experiance   Steven Zombies

[c1][d1]   It seems like the scaling system in this is much more forgiving than in Darksouls/Bloodborne so I think if you get a weapon with nice abilities and/or stats maybe you should try switching your axe out with it. Because you have not put nearly as many levels into your axe skills it seems like it would provide a nice way to try out new weapon types to see if you might like them more than what you currently have without sacrificing to much effectiveness.Dark Holt

[c1] Odd do not neglect to pick up the spirit when you die, even if it has no amrita on the grave you need to have it in order to get it's passive bonuses, in particular every single one gives you a 20% protection regardless of your spirit stat.   Zamusss

[a2][c1][c3]   I think the Kusarigama is a good weapon to use against her, though I found the high stance strong attack to be really useful. The range is very effective. The quick attack can be very effective at the right moment in this stance too. Learnt this the hard way having died to her loads. This game punishes failure with many very finite items.\n\nI find your Souls-like games really interesting, we have very different playstyles and we struggle against very different enemies. Its a great way to supplement playing the game and learn things I missed before.   Nathan Arrowsmith

[c4] I've been steamrolling this game with kusarigama low stance, it is ridiculously good at staggering enemies and you can infinidodge cuz it's low stance. Ze Great Pumpkinani

[a1] Hey Odd, I'm loving the series so far, keep up the amazing work!   Wolf Van den Zegel

[a1] Im really loving this series man keep it up its AWESOME!!!
    XxNinja AssasinxX

[c1] use your spirit more often instead of neglecting to use it it
would make your life more easier it's there for a reason.falconepuch
king

[c5] So, those who have played the game longer than Odd has, is there
any point in doing sub-missions? Or are they just there to grind
levels/amrita/loot?   life4nina

[c6] life4nina yeah pretty much, just loot and materials as well as
guardian spirits and weaponsVincent Chase

[d3] Damn im early af Wolf Van den Zegel

[d1] What happened to Long war 2? Lewis Généreux

[a1][c1]   Hey Mr.Odd really enjoying this playthrough keep up the good
work, couple of pointers for u if u didn't know, the 'call back' u saw
when u were praying is to call back your spirit that's holding onto
your amrita where u died and I think it means you will have your spirit
weapon ability available if u do the call back (could be wrong here).
Also when your spirit weapon is active try pressing Triangle and Circle
together again to launch your guardians special attack, much better
against the yokai :) take care.   Almighty Spud

[c6] Wrong main reward type or not, there are bound to be many other
drops, and it would seem that the level and skills are needed anyway.
    darkether

[b1] Really Odd... That charm hat combo with both the senses was my
comment since you got them... Ah well, you found it in the end.
    Niels Schellekens

[b2] Favorite boss so far. Seems very rewarding to beat.Jaromech
Akachi

[c5] The kusarigama seems to be the weapon for special snowflakes in
this game, am I wrong to believe that? Liam James

[c6] It has kinda cool name and is fairly exotic, so a lot of people
take it.   Hargrovius

[c5] Why are the kunai draining Hino-enma ki?   JonesKnows215

[c1] Try to use more items to see how they will help you in combat.
    Tyler Snow

[d6] This god damn boss killed me so many times. Felt great to return
the favor for sure!   Patrick Rivas

[b2] She is one hot vampire Star Wars :Rouge One

[b2] Damn.That was something else.   Devin Walters

[a4] Barely finished Ep 8 xD great timing once again   Jonathan B

[d5] spaghetti   CJ McLeod

[d3] second   Acornic

[d3] First Quack Team James

[d5] you want to kiss him? Brian G

[d5] Quack Team James kys   Nohrian Scum

CenterStrain's "Resident Evil 7" Let's Play (Blind Run) – Episodes 6 & 7

[a5] Why is his copy of the game so fucked up with the sync?..   sam brooks

[b2] Should've had roach spray for this level, lol.   Richard Daniels

[b2] Could you avoid getting all the spiders to jump on you? I really fear them..doubt I have aracnophobia   Luca Bianchi

[c1] keep the coins in the safehouse chest as they are not needed   Anish Sarkar

[c1] Lol I may not have played this, but I'm sure you can free up space by loading your weapons. I did this in RE4   Kenjo Alangui

[c7] But doesn't he also have it? the weird ability to still have use of his extremities that were cut off are kind of an indication right? How come Zoe can't do this on her own? I know Mia was imprisoned, but Zoe seems to get along just fine. Kimmy Queen

[c1] why do you carry gun powder, seems like an item to keep in the chest Gunner 91

[c1] crafting items should be kept on you from what I can tell.   Mike Wang

[c2] you should start making more trips to your storage box.   KILLAKREED3MIL

[c5] How did he lose is leg ??! i just saw when he lost his hand.   The Fury

[c6] The Fury the player? Jack cut it off, it was in the 2nd episode I'm pretty sure. Noah B.

[d5] prefer prepare centerstrain, but this is also fine Vreckan

[c1] Dude you seriously need to pay more attention, and use the damn flamethrower instead of wasting bullets.   IG

[d4] definitely man   IG

[c2] IG he should burn those nests before letting the flies attack.. that's my opinion tbh yrogue3

[b2] jesus, these cutscenes is funny   Daniel Mironov

[d6] you left a couple of items ... ⬜ yrogue3

[b2] i know right. My OCD is giving me a panic attack every-time he just walks by stuff and never goes back for it.   IG

[d2] Hey Strain, I'm thinking of doing a walkthrough on Madhouse difficulty. Think I should do it? I'm almost done on Normal.   Kayiness2006

[d2] No. Lol. I like it. I'll be posting the first part to my Madhouse Mode gameplay today.   Kayiness2006

[d4] Kayiness2006 Isn't one tour of this fucking madhouse not enough for you?   EgoManiac

[d4] Kayiness2006 yeahKurai

[a1] Great work strain, keep it up!!   郑宇航

[c1] Just a hint leave the coins in the same room box you may in the future I don't know but yeah 🙂   That Mobile Gamer

[a1] Awesome dude I'm just binge watching your series Noe hope your item management improves   That Mobile Gamer

[c5] Why didn't you store the coins at the safe point? Chan Hei Kit

[a1] thanks for playing this strain, i couldnt do that myself lol ^^   prospecial

[c5] isn't there a button to turn 360° a lot quicker strain? Osama Bin Lovin

[d4][d6]   Centerstrain01 My bad, I meant 180°. You did it on part 1 of this walkthrough though (accidentally clicked something) when you first encountered a resident...which is evil. Ba-Dum-Tuss.   Osama Bin Lovin

[c6][s1]   It doesn't work half the time!   Centerstrain01

[a2][c1]   omg if u had reloaded with the fuel you had you could have picked up the other one without having to use another first aid haha\ngreat gameplay strain I'm a big fan   Vítor Mateus

[d3] this game ending has a very good surprise for you strain Anshul Sharma

[a4] You might need to tone down the settings a bit. You're even getting a lot of slowdown when there's a ton of those bugs on screen.   pennehoesje

[d4] Renan Rischiotto haha Gunner 91

[d4] Clearly the superior option! pennehoesje

[a4] He will not do it. He prefers the INCREDIBLE AND OUTSTANDING 4K VISUALS, even if... you know... it's running at 15fps.   Renan Rischiotto

[a2] really enjoying your gameplay   Bill Nikolakis

[a1] im loving this series, waiting for next part..   kK

[d3] Are you gonna upload something today?   Pan Mleko

[a5] Them subtitles tho lol B. Scalabrine

[d4] What? Renan Rischiotto

[d4] Seems like these enemies are really starting to 'bug' you.
      shadowlinkbds

[d4]   shadowlinkbds lol good one   Jake Greco

[s1] Wah wWAH WAhhh   Centerstrain01

[d5] (Sound trombone sound) Gary Beltz

[a4] I actually think the desync might be caused by fps or something,
try lowering res one notch to 1440p and see if it improves?   vedomedo

[a4] Turn off the Anti-Aliasing, 4k does not need that much. Nam
Nguyễn

[c2] The nest can be destroyed completely , just hold down more
flamethrower until it blowed up   zetarn

[a1][b2]   I hate horror games so much that I am fighting with myself
to watch you 'shitting' your pants! Anyway great video again, can't
wait to see more of RE VII recorded by you :) kustkov k

[b2] the classic old crank handle In0centz 1911

[b2] oh man do those bugs and spiders make my skin crawl. The spiders
JUMP at you holy shit dude. BURN EVERYTHING. nukster11

[b2] I hate spiders too, oh man...   Renan Rischiotto

[a5] What with the syncing for the voices? I haven't that problem so
far. WolfenTiger

[c5'] hey center, what happens when you shoot the old lady on the
chair?   dipdip8

[d4] Aww I see, thanks!   dipdip8

[c6] The game doesn't let you aim at her.   Andrés TM

[d4] XD   dipdip8

[d4] You monster! xD Renan Rischiotto

[a1] Loving this series!   JAKEtheBOOTH

[a5] don't need anti-aliasing with resolution that high l ryu

[a1] Ahhh man just binged this whole playlist, loving these so far thanks Strain, can't wait for more. This is why RE is my favorite franchise. Joseph Clayton

[c2] well ok dont forget to take the magnum ammo by the door, you already saw it . And there is some yellow stuff buy one bee nest and in some where clues by the magnum cage room, and again you saw it and did. Just dont forget to take all this awesome stuff xD. Game One

[a1] good to hear ! And really nice lats play and the stream was awesome too . Cant wait for the next episode! Game One

[s1] Don't worry I pick it up soon we come through here many times and don't wanna waste the space till I get the Magnum Centerstrain01

[a1] I've loved all of your walkthroughs over the years, but watching you play horror games has always been my favorite. William Pichkan

[a1] we need more strain crank it fastt!! haha   GHRU readfield

[s1] Thanks for always coming back!   Centerstrain01

[c2] Burn the spiders and bugs, strain. That's what the flamethrower is for... AsianRZ

[d4] not the bees! NOT THE BEES! AHHHHHHH THERE IN MY EYES!!!! Lady Bug Jones

[a1] Good stuff strain, love your work Stevey Peppers

[d4] Nice! Jay Forro

[c2] strain again there is some free shut gun ammo in the room where the broken shut gun was.   Game One

[a1] Keep up the good work strain Michael Covington

[a5] They fucked up the PC version of this game, the console versions as smooth and hiccup free. Ezra Sky

[a1][c1]   Hi there,\n\nthanks for sharing your walkthrough. I am really into RE but am way to scared out by horror games to play it for myself.\n\nGuess my feedback comes a little late, cause you seem to have finished your walkthrough already.\nBut one thing I would like to share: although you keep telling your audience how important item management is over and over again you still seem to almost never take advantage of the storage crate in the safe rooms. It's the key for item management, since RE1. That somehow keeps annoying me... I am sitting here and think 'why the hell you don't unload unused things into this damn crate, Jezz...' ^^'\nAnyway: Nice walkthrough overall! Thank you for uploading and keep up the good work. :) Buzz Harley

[a3] bro i wanna watch your playthrough so bad... but your brain works so slow that im yelling at the damn screen telling you what to do... and i havent even played this game... seriously bro these inventory

mechanics are simple af... are you seriously this slow in the head???
    David Confer

[b1] Ok, I was scratching my balls at 2:03 and I almost ripped my dick off thanks to granny swamp. zombieguy224

[b1] I knew that bitch was going to be there and I still got scared.
    Kimmy Queen

[a1] yo man as a fellow airforce guy like yourself I have to say your doing a bang up job with your videos... I've been subbed to you about a year now and I almost watched everything you put out keep it up
    Justin Jones

[b1][c1]   Explain to me why u are discarding items when u can put them in a lock box ? It wasn't even far shit was annoying me I kno u prolly finished the game but dam use your head son   qhamarii0

[c1] you should leave the shotgun behind and replace it with the magnum   KILLAKREED3MIL

[a4] Hey Strain, not sure if you figured out what is causing the out of sync problems. My game was doing it when I was recording in 60fps. I had to turn it down to 30fps to fix it, bunch of bs if you ask me. Great video as always. chartier67

[d3] u have a shitty pc thats why i have no troubles with lag or sync issues at 100+fpsTheGam3Br3akeR

[c2] Come on man stop shooting the bugs, you've got a freakin flamethrower   GTR Fanboy

[a4] Why put 4k in the title if the video is 1080p? very misleading.
    rogermorse

[a4] Why would you play in 4K but not upload the video in 4K and then name the video that you uploaded (4K/60fps). MrBfg586

[s1] Youtube sucks at processing 4K sometimes it does, sometimes it doesn't   Centerstrain01

[a5] You think it could be because you're playing in 4K? I've played it at 1080 and had no cutscene issues. Kayiness2006

[a1][a4]   Having it in 4K is kinda useless if on youtube the max resolution is 1080p. There is no difference to us. While having less than 60fps on a 60fps video is really disturbing, i can clearly see the framerate going down to 30-40.\n\nI would suggest you next time to not play in 4K and limit yourself to 1440p. :D\n\nAnyway, thank you for not being obnoxious or super 'yo guys wooo yoooo' like any other retarded youtuber.   Sarblade

[a4] Not this video.\n\nAlso, having a stable 60fps framerate is way more important than 4k.   Sarblade

[a4] youtube has a 4k option and it works fine.   IG

[a5] Your right it is 2017 and it is unacceptable, but we are talking about Capcom so there you go chuteboxdisciple

[d3] I wonder if developers for PC are getting lazy now granted I understand that everyone may have his or her gaming rig configured differently so it's hard to get it functional for EVERYONE but seriously fix the issues in this game. Also a question for strain himself when was the last time you updated your software and drivers especially for your video cards? Sometimes driver updates fix issues with specific games and so on. I check for updates for my stuff monthly at least.Gary Beltz

[a5] It could be not sync because of the frames being low, maybe it needs a full 60fps and on 4k you dont really need anti aliasing on you cant notice black lines that much in such high resolution (4k) ▲LLI

[a4][d2]   I have watched other walkthroughs on PC and they dont have the sub title problems.   gaz south

[a5] Hey Strain, some people are saying on google that if you are using a built in sound card that it may be a driver issue. You may want to look into updating your driver for it. RedR4bbit1963

[b2][d3]   whoa! a .44 wildey magnum!\n\nthough technically the iconic wildey magnum is .457 and it's used mostly for big game hunting!\n\na Glock 17 (10 rounds) chambers 9mm vs. a poorly refurbished M1911 (7 rounds) which chambers .45 ACP\n\nhmm....tough choice because both would be rather poor choices (one lacks stopping power and the other could blow up in your hand!) Lady Bug Jones

[d1] +Gary Beltz so: like the m92f in Re5.....I loved that gun since it seemed the critical headshot would STACK if you chained headshots!   Lady Bug Jones

[c1] I say go for the lack of stopping power and go for critical areas when shooting   Gary Beltz

[a1][c1]   With regards to the inventory/equip dilemma you might be having, you cannot equip more than 4 weapons (including the knife) at once. Inventory management is a huge part of this game, I rarely carried more than 2 weapons other than my knife unless i felt like i was going into a boss fight because you will not have space to pick a lot of things up if you are packing 4 guns at all times. Love the vids bud, keep it up. D Samps

[c1] Strain i recommend ditching one of the weapons. You don't need all of them.   Mason Guyman

[c1] Mason Guyman yeah, the shotgun, since the cost of having it in the backpack vs of actually using it does not make sense having it at this level...   kristaps blodons

[b1][d3]   You have no gears to grind on strain... ha! 'Down to business' Resident Evil VII is indeed a down to business kinda game. LMFAO! Funny as shit!\n\nIt's down to business military BOY! HA!
      Johnny Trinh

[b1] I think he was doing a voice imitation of a quote from a TV show or movie notice when he says that he changes his voice. I do stuff like that all the time irl   Gary Beltz

[a5] what kind of graphics card do you use strain? I have a Gtx 1070 and I play in 4k with everything ultra and not a drop in frame at all, plus on a gsync monitor!   Delmar Pereira

[d4] Dewaynes Awesome well it's technically 2k @2560×1440p with every ultra....never had a problem and I do also play on a gaming monitor too
      Delmar Pereira

[d4] Delmar Pereira I didn't know 1070 can touch ultra 4k 100+fps since the 1080 can barely handle some content? I'm learning about pc stuff so maybe there's something Idk.   Dewaynes Awesome

[d4] Dewaynes Awesome I average around 110fps   Delmar Pereira

[d4] Delmar Pereira what's your average fps? Dewaynes Awesome

[s1] 1080 Centerstrain01

[a5] From the benchmarks I've seen, it seems like this game runs like shit on Nvidia GPUs. Hopefully this gets fixed soon.   phasor

[d3] Issac Clarke or maybe Ghost Rider would obliterate every villain in this game   0ZERO5

[a1][b1]   Nice find with the repair kit. Great video   hansmost

[a4] it not the game it your recording soft wear it's sucking so much memory is slowing the game down which is desynchronizing the play back during cut scenesPack Ice

[a1][b2]   I love this series this far, and I'm pretty sure you record multiple videos in advance (might even finished the game already, hell if I know), but if you didn't please do something about your inventory management, it's driving me crazy.BlackHUN

[s1] Clearly you are not use to Resident Evil...you are suppose to not have any space for items that is what makes the game FUN!Centerstrain01

[b1] Yo I nearly punched my iPad when that bitch turned the corner like that! Plasma_Hound11

[d1] Tnx strain.Finally.One more question:Will you do a walkthrough of assassins creed liberation hd?   Luka Marjanov

[a1] oh sempai! you having that aggression in your tone makes you sound so cute!\n\nI like it when you rant about the game's optimization, it's just so cute!   Lady Bug Jones

[s1] All of them Centerstrain01

[d1] Hey strain, the next hitman update will include a new difficulty mode, the professional mode, are u going to do a walkthrough on it?   BendingCheese67

[d4] Nice!!!   BendingCheese67

[s1] Do worms have ears????...wait a min....lol Of course!   Centerstrain01

[c5] Maybe you need to use the d-pad to select and equip the weapon?..I might be wrong tho.   Domagoj Primorac

[a5] The extra slow movements in this game is a big turn off for me. Great story, awesome action, just TERRIBLE movement speed aaahhh   Salix Nigra73

[b1] 8:19 Nope... Nope... FUCK NO! I'm from Panama, I have heard of the Tulivieja I know where this is going so fuck you game... NOPE!   naxo

[d5] Ah! Ok placer conocer a otro paisano :-)   Kimmy Queen

[d5] Kimmy Queen Nah estoy en Chile   naxo

[d5] Ah si? Yo tambien. Vives en los E.E.U.U.?   Kimmy Queen

[d5] Kimmy Queen Panamá   naxo

[d5]   De que provincia vienes?   Kimmy Queen

[d6] I like how Ethan just casually talks like nothing happened oh I just got my leg chopped off but it's fine I poured some Medicine over it works \n\nOh by the way I just beat your mother and her BIG ASS BUGS wish you would of warned me originalKashman

[a1] nice work man... keep up the good work.   devyn jeffery

[d4] devyn jeffery Thanks bro \u003c3 BosleyBozzer

[a1] Love you strain Renato Pires

[a5] set your frame limiter to 30 strain. That's likely the cause for the weird desync issue Euan Ford

[a1] Hey Strain, I rarely ever leave comments but I have been subbed to you for so long now and I've never left a comment on your videos. You are without a doubt my favourite youtuber, and I am absolutely loving this blind playthrough! I (and I'm sure a lot of others!)

appreciate all of the hard work you put into your videos. Keep it up Strain :)   cloeandhan

[d3] give me some money please i need it for my cat   tohmbuhmer

[s1] Welcome to the comment section my friend! Don't be a stranger I love hearing from you all!   Centerstrain01

[a1] Loving the series so far strain, keep up the good (hard =P) work.   James McDaniel

[d1] The music in the save areas reminds me of the menu music from splinter cell conviction also 2nd originalKashman

[d4] originalKashman Damn that's a throwback!   BosleyBozzer

[a1] keep it up strain i like the fast uploads   Ryandeng Deng

[b2] Yay Strain! bonbonafide

FightinCowboy's "Resident Evil 7" Let's Play (Blind Run) – Episodes 6, 7 & 8

[d4] Shout out to Jack and Margaret it's their 28th anniversary :)
      Darth Xodius

[c1] Keep the Coins Cowboy ! !   Prezo1983

[c1] Found out that the antique coins can actually be used to buy the
items in the bird cages.   cj cook

[d3] Man, fucking Kensei counters Warden like Warden counters Raider.
I do like that there are hard counters though. Makes teamwork all the
more valuable, and with the faction warfare, teamwork is enforced
unless you want your faction to be full of shitters. I feel like all
the scrublords chose the Samurai faction because 'lel nippon steeru
katanu!' and that's why they're kind of getting steamrolled in the
faction war right now. Literally Hitler

[c1][d2]   Cowboy! Can't believe you binned an antique coin! You were
just gonna go to the trailer where you could spend them! Check out my
RE7 tips & how to at MeanOld Jammer. Great series mate. Keep going.
      MeanOld Jammer

[c1] Keep the coins, it's how you open the cages, you 'buy' what is in
the cages in the trailer. Love watching you play this series!
      KitDragonFlight

[a1] cool stuff, i thought FC was done with RE7.   Righteous Kung Fu

[d1] FC are you going to play Nioh when it comes out?   Reokai

[c1] Cowboy use the antique coins on the bird cages in the trailer
      haji abu

[d1] Cowboy, will you be doing a full playthrough of nioh, and will
you be doing that along with RE7 or after you're done?   jacob gordon

[c7] 6:22 haven't played the game myself yet but somehow I feel you
could have just watched 'Mia' Tape on that tv screen in the same room
and it would remove it from inventory without losing a coin (which I
guess isn't a big loss anyway since the game allows you to discard it)
to get the broken shotgun   Ghost Rider Production

[d3] Gibbs' rule n°9: Don't go anywhere without a knife Ghost Rider
Production

[d6] You still missed a lot out side   MrKillachristopher2

[c1] Well that's one wasted, the coins are used to get upgrades for
Health, Reload speed and a new gun as you enter a different level, now
you've discard that, that's one coin gone for good. MrKillachristopher2

[c5] what happens if you shoot grandma John Silva

[c6] John Silva it doesn't even allow you to. doesn't allow you to knife her either.K Foye

[a1] Love your videos man!! Keep that shit up bro Angelo Vivero

[c2][s2]   you missed something very important as you walked out of the house..the stims were showing you something right along the house..there is a grate that leads to a repair kit..you can either fix that broken .45 you found in the camper..or the shotgun you swapped the other shotty for..both are better than the weapons you have now..the .45 has more stopping power than 9mm..but 7 round magazine..the shot gun is 2 rounds..longer range, more accurate, more power. I would recommend the .451532chris

[c1] it is..the m19 in resident evil is a 1911, which is a .45\n\noutside of resident evil, there is no such thing as m19 handgun..look at the M19..then look at a real 1911.\n\nI know the .44 magnum is in the cage. 1532chris

[c1] 1532chris it's not a .45 the broken handgun is a m19 there isn't a .45 in this game the gun in the cage is a .44 magnum   Ulquiorra Cifer

[c1] you need those coins for upgrades and the revolver..you use the coins to open the cages in the camper   1532chris

[b2] who needs to watch horror movies when you have a grandma like that. pratyush shukla

[c1] CB do not discard items use the inventory system at save points   BasedGod BasedGod

[d4] Lol at that needy little try hard bitch that thumb downed the video telling them self 'I'm different' lmao you're still giving him views.   Atticus Remus

[d4] +FightinCowboy while it's your prerogative to play how you like, I hope you don't ignore the tips that people are giving you. Yes, people can word them better, that's true, but they're still good tips nonetheless.   Fjorgyn

[c4] uhhhh you don't need the one shot kill gun to beat the game. I never got it and had TONS of ammo left at the end. he's playing it for the first time and you're acting like he's doing stuff wrong or going about it the wrong way, on purpose. get a life.   Jared Plantulli

[d4] I'm sure if you had to entertain and play through games it wouldn't be so easy dude give cowboy a break he makes tons of awesome videos for us so stop complaining cause he isn't super pro at this new game. Atticus Remus

[d5] Paul N. Hold the 'L'   Nads

[a3][s1]   It's a let's play. If you don't like how I'm playing, don't watch ya cunt.   FightinCowboy

[a3] Damnit CB you got rid of the coin!!!!   Colton poppell

[c1] Cowboy the coins open the cages   chris edgeworth

[c2] 19:24 I think there was something under the porch. Or on the side of the porch.   CardSearcher911

[b1] 1:11-1:18 Grandma was humming and you didn't hear it, just wanted to point it out.   Skeith Souls

[d3] GreatSwordOfVictory I mean..... *Insert spoiler about grandma*\nbeat the game today. this shit's crazy   K Foye

[c4] Ya, there is a lot of secret creepy stuff in this game. I recently found out that there is a ghost girl in the first film with the sewer gator crew. She shows up in 1 of 7 random spots and you can only see her for a brief second before she goes away. It's really creepy.   Skeith Souls

[b2] That shit is creepy as fuck. I really hope that you never walk by grandma and she just like fucking goes ballistic on you and tries to murder you.\n\nBut what am I saying, it's a horror game, it's probably going to happen. GreatSwordOfVictory

[d3] I'm last   BABY PYRO

[c2] Watch the video of Mia, it will tell you what happened to her   Jackie Allen

[c2] Watch the video Manny V

[a1][c2]   I believe the 3,5,&9 on the cages mean how many coins you have to put in it to open the cage. I hope you read these and helps to get in the room. p.s. cowboy if u read these I love your videos.   brian ramos

[c2] also the treasure photo is in the drawing room near fireplace   Joshua Henson

[d4] nvm saw u got it Joshua Henson

[a1] Love the 'lets play' series mate! Much love. Andrew Davidson

[b2] yessss!!!! video!!   MxR FRANSISCO13

[a1] hope ur enjoying this game it is so good love ur vids   Joshua Henson

[b2] Finally indeed cowboy hope you're having a good weekend dude   DBJ

[b2] This is goona be sweet.   GameDestroyer67

[d3] god dam, can ur eyes get any bluer OCD Gaming

[c1] Don't know if you figured it out yet Cowboy, you need the antique coins for the items in the bird cages. Definitely don't wanna discard them.\nEdit: Nevermind lol continued watching the video and you did use the antique coins. Was wondering whether or not you would throw them out or not TrixR4kiddz

[a4] Keep Face Cam ! Prezo1983

[c7] 'maybe its zoes' maybe ots grandmas.... jakebarlow100

[a4] How can someone not like you doing face cam?? Lol first of all you getting frightened (genuinely) is fucking hilarious and secondly you got that whole Sons of Anarchy (more specifically Opie's cousin action going on LOL) Darth Xodius

[a4] I like the face cam too   Unestine Walker

[a4] I love the facecam!!! Kinu FoxySpirit

[a4] Kinu FoxySpirit me too lol   Adam Hill

[a4] the facecam is fine to me.   Righteous Kung Fu

[d3] Stop moving OMGaBlackGguy

[a4] Love face cam   Henry Carias

[a4] Part of the fun is seeing your reaction, imo. Keep the facecam. Plus, gnarly beard.   tyagoro

[c5] Hey cowboy I see you can get your PS4 home dashboard up during your stream can you please tell me how i can have this to?   TartanAssassin 90

[d4] +blazedandahalf thanks man. TartanAssassin 90

[c6] check the bottom of the description   blazedandahalf

[d4] if your character was Mexican then he would need a green card as well Sir Waffels

[d4] Carlos Ricardo i love you now, someone who actually doesn't care about racist jokes, thank God these people exist   Sir Waffels

[d4] +Sir Waffels yeahCarlos Ricardo

[d4] do you find my joke funny? Sir Waffels

[d4] +Sir Waffels yeah why Carlos Ricardo

[d4] are you a minority?   Sir Waffels

[a4] U better keep the face cam CB   Cheif 37

[a4] while I think the cam is perfect for this kind of game, having it sitting in front of the subtitle is kind of bad.   vagadagadingdong

[b2] The game is not all that scary after the first hour or so. You quickly get used to the enemies and soon it goes from, 'Oh what the fuck!' to 'Damn, now I gotta run around this asshole so I can save these shotgun shells.' Not So Silent Protagonist

[a1][a4] Face cam is what makes your channel Cowboy, keep up the great content. I could sit for hours watching your play throughs.   ResistTheMoon

[d4] spoiler for .44 magnum: \n\n\n\n\n\n(It uses .44 rounds).Skeith Souls

[d4] lmao XD   BoiThe Pumpkin

[a1][a4] bro love the videos but have you tried putting you cam in the bottom left corner maybe Jimmy Atlas

[a4] The face cam fits this game perfectly! Hanna Jameson

[a4] I've enjoyed the face cam. I don't see one single problem with it.   Al Powell

[a1][d2] Love the playthrough Cowboy, your gonna have so much fun! Check out my RE7 tips & how to @ MeanOld Jammer if you get stuck. Good luck. MeanOld Jammer

[a4] I am neutral on the face cam, but I don't understand the placement. Seems halfway between the edge and center. Why not put it at the edge? I'm guessing some technical reason? Mike

[c1] You should've been more patient and used your coins on that extremely powerful gun . Steroids to me is just a bottle of first aid that could easily be replaced.   Paul N.

[c1] Except it increases your max health, it doesn't just heal you. The 44 mag, while strong, there's shit all ammo for it in the game. The Critigamer

[a1] Keep doing what you do cowboy, fuck everyone who tries to have to change your ways, #BootySquad   Nick Franco

[b1] 'i was hoping she was like a t-rex for a a second, if i just didnt move..' lol awesome cowboy. Chauncey Isom

[a4] personally I love the face cam   mrDIRTYSHOT 7

[a4] I agree with you cowboy face cam is where it's at. Keep up the great content. Frankie Outtachrono

[a4] To be honest, I actually like the facecam!   LemPlaysGames

[d4] Cowboy looks like somone who'd beat you up and proceed to analy rape you in the thumbnail   0--R3APER--0

[a4] I love the face cam especially your expressions   stephanie duvert

[b1] i also stood still at first cause of the t-rex logic. lolmex1jvr

[d4] Change the mesage 'You Failed' swapp the il from failed with rt what do you get = 'You Farted' :) Matthew Fraser

[c1] Trying to shoot hundreds of bugs with a hand gun yeap....Kirage

[c2] You missed an item in the upstairs toilet in the bathroom where u got the wooden figure couple episodes ago. Think it's herb or chem   Kyle Rutter

[b1] HAHAHA T-Rex part got me so bad m8 hahahaha   Andrew

[b2] Spooky game... that's a little too mild for the fricking intensity of that game. it's outright terrifying. I'm watching several lets plays simultaniously to see if everyone is as scared as I am. a real masterpiece!!   Kaiser King

[b2] Hmm, the way the characters talk is just funny to me, and there're some parts in the game that just had me genuinely laughing. One moment that stood out to me was the part with Jack Baker in the garage doing donuts, that was funny. I'm not saying it's a bad game or anything! Sun Levi

[b2] Kaiser King I'm playing the game for the VR and I can honestly say it's not as scarry as it is creepy. I'm having a blast playing it.   Zombitology h

[a5] I don't believe you find it hilarious. It's made by some really capable people - they address so many things that you can be scared of that it is highly improbable there's not one thing that doesn't freak you out. basements, bugs, children, mad people, mutilation... dark places, sunny places... \n+The Critgamer , I'm gonna check those out for sure. I didn't think I was but obviously now I'm into horror games!   Kaiser King

[d4] And yes I know I included two games, not one. The Critigamer

[a5][d1]   Yes, I'm sure you do, sun...it is terrifying, I wouldn't say a masterpiece, but it is very scary. The scariest game I've ever played and one of the ones I consider a masterpiece of horror is amnesia: the dark descent and alien isolation. The Critigamer

[b2] yay xD   Felix Quintero De Léon

[b2] The waste of ammunition is real! RazorbackX99

[a1] I feel like cowboy has tunnel vision he over looks everything like his content tho   Alejandro perez lugo

[b1] 13:42~14:25 Margaret Uncensored Edition lmfao! XD   Darth Xodius

[b1] @fightincowboy never seen such profanity 14:27?! Ummh cowboy you might want to watch some of your own twitch vods.   ks arcturis

[b2] Man oh man Ethan is a bitch ch1c0p1n0

[b2] I wanna play this so bad now to be honest.   Porcelain Pup

[b2] I die a little bit inside every time you waste ammo shooting the swarms XD   chrisakabigc

[a4] Thanks for moving the face cam to the edge.   Mike

[c2] there was a bobble head at the end of the hallway before the main hall if your going for them. in the first house   Greed One

[c5] Did you play the whole thing in one sitting? Aryan J

[c2] yo Cowboy, i recommend using knife to those insects cause it is such a waste of bullets and those big one can be killed with one attack. It's better to have more spare bullets for when you are in pinch.   Rensol Rhoc Tayo

[b2][d1]   exactly, I almost cringed every time he shot at the bugs. Reminds me of the insects in the 1st RE, or GC remake which is even better sierra kobold

[a1] Love the vids!! Keep it up CB!   Krystal Charles

[a1] yo cowboy the mowhawk with the beard makes you look extra BAD ASS!! MarkoftheJ44

[b1] I'm gonna start calling people 'fucking shitcocks' lmao   darkblood677

[b1] 'This game has proven to be quite educational so far. I'm studying English as a second language, and I learn new and useful words every episode.' Kaiser King

[a1] i hate playing horror games , its better to watch someone play it :P , good gaming cowboy   Brad Lee

[c2] u get the crow key next don't forget to go back in the other house drawing room for the crow door   Joshua Henson

[a3] This guy's terrible at this game...   Steezus christ619

[a3][c4]   Steezus christ619 dude this is his fist playthrough im on my second playthrough and I still miss stuff so go fuck ur self   Joshua Henson

[d1] I bet most of you are watching this from the last for honour
stream :P   tyler beavan

[c2] To destroy the nests you need to do two things. Destroy the outer
shell and then destroy the core.   CardSearcher911

[d4] you commented early, dint you? :p BoiThe Pumpkin

[d4] Steezus christ619 you mean it *bugs* you   Ultimate Gohan

[d4] Nevermind, you figured it out.   CardSearcher911

[d4] CardSearcher911 it bugs me he didn't notice that.   Steezus
christ619

[c2] There are 3 stages to the bug nests so you got to burn them until
they pop 3 times Unleashed Beast6

[b1] Nice first minute lol, gotta love that recording check.   Caller
ofCrows

[b2] nice I just finished the episode before this showed up!   Son Of
Destruction

[d3] Third comment ▯ Da Chimp

[d3] Second comment   Alvin chang

[d3] First comment   King Legend

Galm's "Resident Evil 7" Let's Play (Blind Run) – Episodes 5 & 6

[b2] Its creepy hearing galm double back when he's walking so it
sounds like a second pai of footsteps so im always like... OH
GOD...WAIT FOR IT, WAIT FOR IT.....oh its just galm...agian   Cicire

[a5] Is anyone else annoyed by the fact that Zoe seems to switch
between a British and a Southern accent?   Man Of Steel

[b2] I wanna say the ending of this is gonna be something like you
can't leave because you end up becoming too far gone yourself. Frost

[c7] I'm thinking that by the end of the game you could either escape
or wined up just like the crazy daddy. Sean Paul

[b1] Steroids = Leveling Up? Well shit, maybe I shouldn't have said
no when a kid at school offered me some. Everybody needs more max HP!
    SirMan McDude

[d3] Outro song makes sense now lol   AshCatchem

[d3] Outro song ?   Milen Kolev

[d3] 'go tell aunt rhody'   Daggerisafire

[c1] Antique coins are for bird cages GavMan926

[d4] I think you've just figured that out   GavMan926

[b1] who else was just yelling at the screen for galm to store his
shotgun shells...or at the least store either his hard handgun shells
or the treasure photo...   Acertorix

[b1] Oh look! A needle in place full of cannibals,dead things and
mold creatures, it's probably safe to just inject myself with whatever
is inside tvfm

[d3] anyone know the outro music? paddyboy99

[d3] 'go tell aunt rhody'   Daggerisafire

[c5] Wondering why he held onto those coins so long...... lol
    LunchableMeatloaf

[c6] LunchableMeatloaf he probably thought something was gonna need
them until he saw what they were actually for. 'Just in case'
basically. Malenrick

[b1][c7]   *sigh... I just hope you can handle my mother.* 23:46\nAm I
the only taking that as Zoe implying that mommy dearest is tougher than
crazy daddy?   PhoenixResolve

[b1] 13:02 Never ask in a RE game for more stuff to show up and attack, you will most likely get what you ask for. (\u003e^.^)\u003e
     Nathan Blad

[c5] Okay seriously, does anyone have any theories about the old woman, aka Granny? She just pops up everywhere! If I'm being honest, Granny scares me more than anyone and anything else in this game. *I don't know what to expect from her*. She's like that character that you thought couldn't do shit, but comes back to hand your ass on a silver platter for underestimating her.\n\n*She creeps me the fuck out!*
     Indigo Hue

[d4] +Nick Smalcom make me RKHSMT5

[d4] she's the old man from texas chainsaw massacre, go watch it
     Nick Dempsey

[c7] Her name's probably Rhody since she was humming the song from the games trailer which is titled 'Go Tell Aunt Rhody' Thomas Danforth

[c7] Indigo Hue She's the key. I have a hunch she plays a bigger part in the story than the rest of the family   Concanbill 101

[d4] Granny is Doctor Who   RKHSMT5

[c2] Galm ,the reaper kit under the house   Tran Bao

[d4] scroll back up you pussy XD Edwin Concepcion

[d4] Zachary Fitzgerald YEA BOI!! ME TOO!!.....* whispers * comrade
     Corteslatinodude

[d3] I'm on mobile   Zachary Fitzgerald

[d3] What's the outdo song patrick xiao

[d3] I believe it is, 'go tell aunt rhody'   KinsoBlade

[d4] Outro*   patrick xiao

[c1] make sure to go back for that shitty shotgun :P it said repairable too   Juggernautsfury

[c5][d1]   Does Barry show up and open the door again?\n\n\n\nYou get it, it's because it's a reference to the original game just like the room was. nahnah390

[d4] Zachary Dionne he probably has but with game like this, you have to play it twice just to get the full experience   Juggernautsfury

[d4] true, don't wanna spoil for others reading comments. galm has probably beaten it already though. Zachary Dionne

[d4] if i tell you that it would be spoilers.   Juggernautsfury

[c5] but then how would he get out of the trap room?   Zachary Dionne

[d2] I started at pt3 cause I watched Bryce Jovannicon

[a1] In the time that I finished episode 4, you uploaded episode 5 + 6! Love it! Jessica Fioritura

[d4] If Ethan makes it out alive. He's probably gonna die from all the steroids GaLm is gonna make him inject. Michael Foschi

[d4] He'll be strong enough to punch a boulder.   Arphila

[d4] They'll have to have an open casket cause his abs will be poking out like mountains.   Fawkes Pryde

[d4] He's gonna be ripped though. Sundowner

[a5] this game doesn't seem as scary. i like it   FurryReaper1

[d4] Galen Smith Too busy becoming camera man of the century hahaha   PrototypeNinja16

[a5][d1]   FurryReaper1 that's because the main character can actually arm himself. In stuff like Outlast, the main character never arms himself so he can never defend himself. Those dumbasses can only run   Galen Smith

[c2] Hey, just soz ya knowz, in the RV there's a backpack that increases your inventory space. You might have seen it already cause ya know, recording to upload delay is a thing. Anywho good luck not dyin an shiz.   Sam Liddell

[c5] galm whats your thoughts on the game   Reven Radic

[c6] Reven Radic \nHe'll probably say in the Finale. He always does.   Zachary Barrios

[b2] galm omg thank you buddy you've saved my night   sharkflamethrower

[b2] I really hope you found the backpack in the next episode in the trailer galm.   ninjascout

[d6] He found A backpack.   KinsoBlade

[a5] Glad I caught this on the live stream with GaLm But this game's freaking inventory is ass xD anyone else who was there understands! xD   Alpha Repo

[a5] Eh. I agree it could be better, but I like that it limits the amount of things you hold. This is survival horror, after all. Zappy Caboose

[a1] This game is kinda cheesy but I enjoy watching you play it.
Thanks for uploading GaLm.   SuperOriginalName

[d5] I finally got here   HDRFAOP

[d1] Galm, Ace Combat 7 is coming out, and its going to be on PC too!
    onearmedbandit84

[d1] I'd be surprised as hell if he doesn't end up playing it. After
all, he came up with his name from playing Ace Combat Zero.
    randomness217

[b2] nice another part!   savage sleepy

[a1] love you galm no homo i think at least \u003c3   Daily sn0w

[a1][c1]   If you want some advice later on your gonna be able to buy a
weapon and some stuff sorry for the spoilers but buy the steroid before
anything trust me you won't get the gun for a long time just so you
know but do what you feel is right love your videos can't wait to see
more :)   Michael Meier

[d4] Enchanter Tim damn son you just got rekt...your gonna need to
take them needles out your bum.   Corteslatinodude

[a3] Enchanter Tim shove a cactus up your ass.   Solaire of Astora

[a3] +Enchanter Tim Your a dick   Gears3 -r.i.p in peace dom

[a3] Michael Meier you look like a friendless virgin. kill yourself
    Enchanter Tim

[d3] He already completed the game in a single sitting. Knight Havel

[d4] Just finishd the other episode lolJayce Miller

[d4] Jayce Miller me to   joseph palmer

[a1] Good shit boi   Corncakes Meme

[a1] Love your vids gaLm! Keep it up mqn   Dapbear

[b2] Is difficult watching so much ammo go to waste.   HitodamaKyrie

[b2] Okay, no, the giant evil moths? I can't do that. I just can't.
Ick. MegaShinyObject

[b2] I HATE THIS PART.Jacob A. Gallant

[b1][c7]   I think galm was more excited about finding the backpack
then anything else XD\n\nAlso i think the mom is different then jack,
cause you stood right beside her and she didn't even turn around till
you shot her   Cicire

[b1] Anyone else love the fact that galm was calm at first with the bugs then not even 10 secs later was like hell no, kill them all?
      Colin Durham

[b1] Crow key dokey!   The Modern Time-Ghost

[b2] gets machete through hand\ngets stung by mutated wasp \ngets bit by spiders\nmultiple cuts on hands \nleft hand gets cut off and stapled back on and some how still able to use it \nPOURS ALCOHOL ON IT AND FIXES EVERYTHING LOL!!!   Cj Robinson

[b2] I'm not normally scared of bugs, but there's only so much I can take before I huddle up in my chair to make sure that nothing is crawling on my legs... SirMan McDude

[c5] I've only watched like two series from Galm, but is he always this salty? It seems like he is just trying to find the negative in the game rather than actually appreciate it. Like he assumed it would be bad and heard re6 was bad so now its just confirmation bias. Then again I might be doing the exact same thing to him right now. I personally really like the game however I've seen multiple lets players just shit on the game sometimes within the first couple hours. Just baffles me a lil m8.   The ChillyWinds

[c6] If by 'Much of his frustration' is simply one area/corridor and with one singular aspect related to it. Sure. But that wasn't solely what was going on. From going through walls/doors, to infinite spawning, to be incredibly annoying to deal with and likely other things he mentioned that I can't remember. As for what's obvious? Oh get off it. People miss shit, easily. Even more so when dealing with something annoying as hell. Engelbrekt Haakansson

[c2] Much of his frustration in this video is of his own making. You clearly aren't meant to approach the fireplace withthe nest above it until you have the flamer. That's why the devs provided the other path. In a rush to provide content so many LP miss so much that's obvious.
      JohnBoyd

[d4] GaLm Listen all I can say is you shouldn't take my comment so seriously. I tried to make it light hearted on the off chance you'd reply, but you seem to think Im hating on you. Im not. I made an observation that I admitted could be wrong and that's that. I don't consider being salty as an insult so if it came off that way I don't know what to tell you. Don't feel the need to defend yourself so much! I don't like reading plus I'm gonna continue watching anyway. The ChillyWinds

[s1] I mean, I can understand feeling frustrated at some players being pretty negative about a game you like, but you made a blanket assumption/question about me being 'always this salty' on a Let's Play that I haven't really said much out of turn. That's a pretty negative thing to do as the first comment you've ever posted, and its obviously directly towards me. Even in your clarification, when you try to say

the comment wasn't suppose to be entirely directed at me...you say that the majority of my commentary is me finding faults with the game but that's...false. Objectively, blatantly false. The first 3 episodes of this series alone should dispel any notion that I'm just trying to find fault with the game and hating on it, so you'll have to excuse my skepticism. Especially when you say you watched my LPs on The Last of Us and The Witcher 3? Both games I've given 10 out of 10s? If you can watch me play games that I super enjoyed the most and still think I'm permanently 'salty' then maybe its not me but you. \n\n\nI've dealt with thousands of commentors who perceive any notion of disdain or sarcasm as hating on a game or being permanently angry. And I can't really do much about your perception at that point. I'm gonna complain about things that annoy me, its a Let's Play and the whole point of it is that I'm commentating my thoughts and reactions and perception of things. If you can't handle it...tough, I guess. But any notion that I'm permanently annoyed or picking apart games is wrong, and I have thousands of videos to show that. GaLm

[d6] I remember at the beginning of the episode, GaLm had 21 shotgun shells, and by the end he has next to none :(Taylor Jordan

[c7] her lamp must attract bugs   nick dempsey

[d4] like moths nick dempsey

[b2] Jesus Christ calm your mouse moving down son you missed a bunch of stuff because you play like this is some twitch shooter.   slinkyatrest

[b2] Mother fucking bugs man.   Frost

[d4] BEES! Hehehe.   Jenna

[d3] song on end?   crossfirecro gaming

[d4] Bug spray, a lot of bug spray   GavMan926

[d1] man this dishonored 2 dlc looks scary   BadBatchTGD

[b1] God I knew that pit scene was coming sometime, but I forgot when.\nFUcking soda evERYWHERE   peep911

[d1] I've never played resident evil but I'm pretty sure crazy bug ladies and mummified babies weren't in in the original ones   Elias Martinez

[d3] Pretty sure a big animal of some sort was in one.\nI know it was also disgusting to see.\nNever got to play the old ones, but it was something I did see from an LP someone did.   peep911

[d4] not ruining anything   jonathan williams

[d5] glam ethan is daddy of something that cause things mia is a mommy of it jonathan williams

[d1] GaLm the forward button on the Deathadder is a good pick for melee in Overwatch, don't have to run your left hand all over the place cuz your right thumb's already there   gizmo16x

[d3] what's the song at the end? Daniel L

[d3] Daniel L go tell aunt rhody Ford Shark

[a4] I think you'd probably get more views if you did facecam, believe it or not people actually like to see the players reactions.   Solo Assassino

[d4] Solo Assassino if you're 12 slinkyatrest

[c7] I'm guessing that the Bakers lost their original chilldren during whatever biohazard struck them and they've been kidnapping kids since to replace the original batch. Mia is the one, who got away at some point.   Burori1

[b2] If it were me I'd be dead the second the bugs appeared. Lourenço Sansana

[d1] Did GaLm just try to 'Corvo' the bugs with his knife?   Fawkes Pryde

[b1] 'Alright, you little cocksucker, let's get down to business.'...To defeat the Huns? John Watts

[b1] That stupid jump scare of the mother on the stairs is the first time this game has actually made me jump lol Jmkingy

[b1] 'I agree, I'm being incredibly rude', immediately returns with a shotgun XD. Hyosik Shin

[d3] What's the song that plays at the end of each episode?   Jester's Tears

[d3] Jester's Tears It's somekind of rearrange of the original 'Go tell aunt Rhody' Grim Reaper

[c5] Why did GaLm give up sneaking/conserving ammo at that point and go into CoD-mode again?   BaconOctopus

[c6] BaconOctopus probably because he thought he could kill her like he did Jack since he had the weaponry for it. hes naturally aggressive as a player, and it probably made him feel better, even if it screwed him later. Malenrick

[a5][b2]   Those bugs (and bug lady herself) seemed super annoying. When they were near the nests it was alright but as a boss mechanic I'm gonna say nope! PhoenixResolve

[a1] oh geez \n this is awesome man!! xD   ishcolo

[d1] I guess this isn't like Dishonored 2 where you can just slash your way through the Bloodfly nests and everything will be fine. XD   Ithaldir Es'Teherin

[d1] 1:54\nI like to use the forward and back buttons on my mouse for my forward/back on my browser. Also I used them in Dishonored 2, for crouching and choking because control and c where really annoying to get to while I was stealthing constantly.   Ithaldir Es'Teherin

[c1] A large waste of ammo... man, why do I feel like that's gonna bite GaLm in the ass later? x3   masterkevkev

[b2] can't wait for the next one Steven Altern

[c2] The repair kit under the house   Tran Bao

[c1] Galm, just letting you know that you can get rid of the Scorpion Key now to free up some inventory. It's only used to get the shotgun.   Victor Vici

[d5] What This Key Activation?\nPliss Tell Me   sampe doris sianipar

[b1] lmfao the happiness at that backpack. lovin it!   mathew carr

[a1][a2]   Great commentary, great aim, and a lot of uploads each day. You just earned a sub :D   Derp Herpingston

[d3] lol i do the same with my mouse galm, hate those damn buttons.   Zachary Dionne

[a1][c1]   oh Galm you gonna regret not loading back a previous save cause if there is anything I learned from resident evil you better keep your ammo as much as you\ngreat vid by the way   RadM IsRad

[a1] Keep up the good work galm   Varune Harbukhan

[d3] anyone know the outro song? watari

[d4] much appreciated watari

[d3] its call go tell aunt rhody but it the resident evil version.   Jester the king

[a5] I love how much detail they put into the game. You can see the stings on Ethan's hands!   Jj Seaward

[d4] Jester the king Aahhhh, reminds me of the good ole' days of camping. Fuck bugs.   A regular Plumbus

[a5] like the bumps when he gets stung alot by the bugs Jester the king

[a1][d3]   if I can get the song in the end of the video that would be nice, and keep up the great work galm always liked your videos Soul Otaku

[d3] 'Go tell aunt rhody', is the song KinsoBlade

[a5][d1]   This res evil actually reminds me a lot of the original. Separate houses, really restricted slots, bug/monster infestations. Like yeah that's the series in general, but it reminds me a LOT of the original. Hunter Reynolds

[a5] yeah and to change it up a little bit I mean it does get a little repetitive but the stories were usually good Luke Bottoms

[d1] Yeah, the moment I saw the reveal of the giant main house, I got total RE1 vibes. Hounoru

[a5] I think they were aiming for the roots for looong time fans of res evil to make them happy Jester the king

[b1] The scare before the bug pit is the first to really get me. ▢ Altick88

[b2] I fucking hate bugs.   savage sleepy

[d4] Marco De Lira agreed. Solaire of Astora

[a1] Need more pls this is awesome   Mike D

[c7] my guess is is that mia had a daughter the made them immortal and she went back to get her but her family said hell no and kept her captive they're calling him daddy i guess cause if she gets her back then well hes her dad...idk that just a guess -smɑckɑvelí-

[d4] your close very close when it gets to the ending of this game it will sum up what you said so good guess Jester the king

[c7] If you remember in the beginning when Mia chainsaws your hand off, she stops attacking you because she gets sidetracked with her task of 'containing' something. She also keeps going on about how everyone is depending on her, but then again she could've been talking about the family.\n\nBut just think, maybe she's with Umbrella and she was there to do something. Maybe she WAS 'babysitting' or maybe its all connected to the ship that Jack wrote about washing in. Strife Rixa

[d4] nevermind what I said I never played all the res evil games so I just based it on what I saw sorry.Also you didn't spoil anything I had already seen the ending.   Jester the king

[c7][s2]   +Jester the king Holy shit. Use punctuation, man!\nAnyway, It was a picture stating that 'they're watching us' or something. Nonetheless, Umbrella can't be involved because the Umbrella Corporation fell in the late 90's or early 2000's. The stuff in this game is recent, like at least within three-to-four years, and like I

said earlier, this occurs in 2017. Now, it's entirely possible that the Bakers have had this shit (The Mold) going on for far longer than we realize, and that Umbrella was watching them when the Corporation was functioning. But that's nothing but speculation.\n\n\n\n\n\n\n\n\n*☢☢Spoilers☢☢Continue at your own risk☢☢*\n\n\n\n\n\n\n\n\n\nYou've been warned. It's the fucking rival corporation Wesker took control of. The little girl that Mia was babysitting was one of their experiments (E-001), and the boat wrecked near the Baker household. Also, the little girl is the old lady, she just ages extremely quickly without some kind of injection.   Zappy Caboose

[c7] wrong the umbrella corps is involved because they are shown and in the demo there was a pic of a umbrella corp helicopter also the ship is involved in this to because theres a drawing in the game hints at this Jester the king

[c7] That was my thoughts as well. Some are saying she had the kid, but it doesn't add up. Hunter Reynolds

[c7] I don't think Umbrella has anything to do with this... This takes place in 2017. Umbrella Corp. would have fallen long ago... I think it's more likely that it's that unknown third party that Wesker took control of at one point. I _definitely_ think it has to do with the ship, though. In the intro video with Mia, you can see what appears to be water in the background. Zappy Caboose

[b1] Is anyone else annoyed at how much ammo he wasted when he tried to fry the mother?   jthedog

[a2] jthedog \nHis flamethrower usage was not optimised. Otherwise, he did okay   EHW2

[d4] Is anyone else annoyed at comments like this that are useless and whiney?   DotA. Diamond

[d4] jthedog well you can't blame him he is probably freaking the fuck out when she came after him Zombiekllr games

[a2] I mean he WAS trying to figure out if there was an efficient way of killing ol Margy Marge, but I was thinking 'Man, you're gonna regret this little experiment later GaLm...' Ha ha. Joshua Gray

[a2] Doesn't change the fact that he tossed the ammo out like candy. Atleast he is the type that learns from this kinda stuff so I guess he'll be alright.BaconOctopus

[a1] It's so cute hearing Galm theory crafting :) I hope he enjoys the ending of the game and the truth behind Mia   Young Drawgonball

[c5] So who do you think he will save? Dave Survivor

[d4] 1:35\nhttps://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hRH1tYD6bow   The Grim Peanut

[a1] my god GaLm, i love you so much (no homo (maybe)) Natsu Dragneel

[a1] Dame galm you update so fast I love it this is why I sub (:
      Yang Arnold

[b2] BUGS!? BUGS! SMASH 'EM! THE ONLY GOOD BUG IS A DEAD BUG. The
Kaiser is wiser

[d4] no it go like this 'NO not the bees not the bees not the fucking
bees nees'hopefully you get that Jester the king

[d4] The Kaiser is wiser not the bees not the bees not the bees
      Titan

[b2] another one \u003c3   FurryReaper1

[d4] Reply plz Erin Fleischer

[d3] just keep uploading please deavon dungeon

[d3] BioKaizer no i will hold my subscription hostage until he uploads
more RE7. Upload pls   naits95

[a4] You're already getting 6 videos a day(3 RE7, 1 OW, 1 Pokemon, and
1 other). So just be patient and wait for the next day. KinsoBlade

[d3] just finished5   Thomas Grauel

Odd's "Resident Evil 7" Let's Play (Blind Run) – Episodes 7 & 8

[s1] The first half of this video is meant to be a lesson in ammo conservation... LEARN WELL YOUNG SPLEEN EATERS.\nI don't think we're nearing the end, but what other upcoming titles are you guys interested in seeing? Lemme know! ChristopherOdd

[d3] What is your job @ChristopherOdd? Simon Ward

[d1] Silent Hill 1-3 and Resident Evil 1-Code Veronica X ;)
     Christoph

[d1] Haru Yeah, Silent Hill Series with Mister Odd would be great :)
     Christoph

[c2] More like the entirety of the video lmao.\n\nGets flamethrower
\u003e Uses shotgun to destroy hives. (Odd Logic). Viktor Stagnetti

[d1] Chris playing Silent hills one to three will be the most epic shit on youtube. Haru

[d3] Hey Odd are you from Canada or northern US   Commenter38

[d1] You should play Dead Rising Mollie McMullan

[a1] you're so brave !!!!! Dasha Shehade

[d1] Make a RE4 lets play! c: gosenica44

[b1] 'Don't just stand there! Do something!' seems like an awfully strange thing for a perpetrator to say to the person who is trying to save their victim.   티나

[d1] Those nests give me flashbacks to the bloodflies in Dishonored 2.
     MoMoto

[b1] You feel bad about saying fuck? lol, come on man. Julien Quenneville

[a1] This has been my favorite playthrough of RE7 so far. Thanks!
     Shane Sexton

[d4] go back to the caravan and SHUT THE GODDAMN FRIDGE!!!!
     highlandrab19

[c2] its a shame this video is a little old under that walk way wen u get out side is a repair kit u missed   snidaman 666

[c5] do the coins open them Johnathan Gantner

[d4] nm   Johnathan Gantner

[a2][d1]   The greatest thing about watching Christopher is how invested he gets in the game. When he's playing Xcom, he talks to every

soldier like they could hear him. In RE he audibly recoils at the sight of bugs. Idk, it kinda helps me with the immersion Frost Archer

[b1] That left hand sure is clean.   Kaarel Kahu

[c2] 26:55 I like how there are still certain things that hint at the fact that this is actually taking place in our 2017 and not some alternate reality, i.e this energy consumption rating chart with the color codes xD   Ulysse Z

[d4] Yeah, but there is the indicator which efficiency it actually is?? I want to know how enviroment friendly their gadgets are..   Amraston

[a1] lol.\nOdd, playing a game where the dead don't stay dead, he's blown off countless heads, split a guy with a chainsaw and encountered all manner of disgusting things, but it's saying 'Fuck' that gives him pause.\nI love Canadians.   Essero Eson

[d4] Anyone got a brown paper bag ?   Sapphire Rose

[a1] chris sometimes you just have to drop those f-bombs just to release the tension, no harm in it. keep up the good work man   alungwilliams1

[a1] i absolutly anjoy your lets plays. They make my day complete :). Keep going! Big fan here love your content   Samuel Narayanan

[d4] My pocket knife is *always* what I go to to defend myself against a cloud of aggro'ed wasps. Always works because mad skills.   tin pin

[b1] that gasp breath thing at @21:31 made me lol illfresh

[d6] old creepy houses always have so many nice paintings around the walls Cat Scott

[a1] Yep, the game scared the shit out of us. Should be a good sign for the series...Peter Huang

[c1] stop using first aid when you took 1/1000th of a damage from flies.   Alex

[a1] Why aren't you more famous i mean other channel dont even come close Wolf man

[b2] Spiders...yay.   Billy Smith

[d3] Chris, i thought u quit ur job to go fulltime on youtube? I know it's none of my business but just curious! :) Niño Paulo Reblando

[d3] new cryptid: mothmom   Gwen Stephan

[d4] Never thought about fighting flies with a knife, but after watching this video i will give it a try.   Jeff Peters

[b2] i cringed when you used your bullets on the hives....
      chopaface

[b2] ugh this is making me itchy B McG

[b1] 27:30\nThat exhale tho Skyfur

[a1] F - BOMB is cool!YoungBloodX

[c2] there's so many bullets you miss. there's a repair kit for the
broken guns under the stairs you access from outside by removing a
metal sheet Reginald Cooper

[c2] Those white bins with the metal grates are typically for storing
potable water.   Armegedon Knight

[d3] Dam, odd's house has a basement!? I wonder what kind of job he
has to live in a house that has a basement.   mongojr100

[d3] Face reveal at 300k?   Pierce Olenick

[s1] +Pierce Olenick the face is out there   ChristopherOdd

[b1] When he walked into the old house, and the hives are just THERE -
'OH FUNK, WE'RE GETTING REALLY RESI NOW BOY' MagatsuPanda

[d6] Every time I watch this series, I can't help but imagine Chris
sitting in front of his computer, totally concentrated on playing,
making his comments, the only light on his basement that of the screen,
and that not much due to the game's dark colors. And just in one
particularly scray scene, a hand grabs him by the shoulder.... that
hand belonging ot his wife, and she screams both by what's happening in
the game and Chris's reaction to her touching him in that precise
moment. \n\nI wonder if that ever happened, or if mine is just a crazy
dream?   Gabino Lopez Sanchez

[b1] I hope Marguerite Odd comes back, that had me dying!!   Lara
Garrison

[a1] you deserve way more views Michael Jordan

[b2] Yes! New episode - thanks Chris! andre giant

[b1] 27:28 lol Synystr7

[b1] 22:18 Chris' Mini orgasm.   Karl mendoza

[c7] I think the idea of hanging up dolls is from Isla de las Munecas
- The Island of the Dolls. A real place south of Mexico City\n\nDon
Julian Santana Barrera was the caretaker of the island. The story goes
that Julian found a little girl drowned in mysterious circumstances
while he was not able to save her life.\n\nShortly thereafter, Julian
saw a floating doll near the canals. Most probably, the doll belonged
to the girl.He picked up the doll and hung it on a tree, as a way of
showing respect and support the spirit of the girl.\n\nJulian was

apparently haunted by the spirit of the girl and started hanging more dolls in an attempt to please her spirit.He soon realized the dolls themselves were possessed by the spirits of dead girls, and continued to collect creepy dolls hanging them over the entire island.\n\nAccording to those close to him, it was as if Julian was driven by some unseen force that completely changed him.\n\nApparently he was very marked by the fact that he was not able to save the little girl's life.\n\nAfter 50 years of collecting dolls and hanging them on the island, Julian was found dead, drowned in the same spot where the girl did. Many people on the island believe that Julian has joined the other spirits of the island.\n\nA pretty cool and creepy story and you can even visit the isle. People say that the dolls move by themselves and even whisper to each other. I know i certainly won't be visiting the place, but it's still cool to read about. NMGSGaming

[b1] 27:30 thats the sound of happiness right there   Rafael Monteiro

[d1] This is outlast with weapons.   Ivan Petkovic

[c2] i think you never checked the downstairs area in the place by the 3rd dog head (there was a staircase right behind where the last dog head was before you got ambushed) F0XYr4bB!T

[c2] It just lead down to where he fought the boss. That's all. There was nothing of importance. TheForwardSlashSlash

[c2] there was a flamethrower outside in the video with your wife, you picked it up and looked at it.   [MW3]Nukem_Gamer

[c7] I thought it was two daughters. Didn't Mia come to babysit someone. Zoey sounds to old to be the person she is baby sitting.   Surf N Turf

[c7] Tsunami Surfer babysitting the little evil maybe? dwiki dimitra Liani

[c1] you have no clue how usefull the reload speed is.   ironmaidenmetalgod

[a1] Throroughly enjoying this game and watching Odd play it. Brandon

[d1] Watching you play through this has me highly anticipating what's going to happen with you with Outlast II comes out.\n\nPractice your F bombs now Chris. Arkane

[d1] Where's that highly flammable Orbon Rum when you really need it?\n\n(Aka, please don't tell me I'm the only one getting Dishonored 2 flashbacks)Verroak Krasha

[a1] The best walkthroughs on YouTube! ❤□   Kimberly Marriott

[c7] If I was in this situation I would either jump into the water and wait for a crocodile to come and eat them or just shoot myself in the head. Let's be honest, even if this guy survives he is going to have serious mental issues Al Bartolina

[b2] EW man I HATE fucking insects srsly! xD TheMrUnshaved

[d4] Comment section!!!!! Let me hide in here please. I bring much letters   Al Bartolina

[a1] please just concentrate on uploading this game, I really really want to find out what happens but I refuse to watch any other lets plays other than yours!   Tim L.

[c7] Here's my theory about what's going on based on what we saw so far:\n\nIn one of the notes left by Jack (Daddy) we could read that when he was still sane (judging by his coherent thoughts), there was a powerful storm in this area, which crushed some ship nearby. I think it's possible it was a shipment by either Umbrella Corporation or one of their successors with the new biological weapon of some kind, which took a shape of a fungus. The children drawings and some pictures show there was a third child in the family, most likely the little girl we saw as Mia, who might be the one they keep upstairs of the old house. Jack comments that they received their gift from his 'little girl' implies she was the first one who was exposed to the toxic waste from the ship. Later on she spread the infection to the other members of the family, with Zoey being infected as the last, presumably because of the implications that her and her family weren't seeing eye to eye, so she might have been away from the house until recently. The fungus seems to gave them regenerative abilities and superhuman strength, but also made them emotionally unstable and insane. In their madness they considered it a gift, so they planted the fungus in their home (which also produces the black goo) and used it to share this gift with anyone they were able to capture. \n\nHow does Mia and Ethan fall into that? Well, they hired her as a babysitter for their younger daughter, before the people started go missing, so they might have been still pretty sane. The girl seems to be fond of Mia, judging by her drawings of her and Lucas sarcastically calling both Mia and Ethan 'mommy and daddy', so she forced Mia to stay after all hell broke loose, making her a prisoner. But then Mia send the message to Ethan, so he would stop searching for her. Later on he received a message saying where he's gonna find her, most likely send by the girl pretending to be Mia. I think what that girl wants is to Mia stay as part of the family forever in her own fucked up way, so she lured Ethan, her husband, to make her happy, so she had no reason to leave, and then wanted to infect both of them, so they would join them.   wojto16

[d4] O.k. Then...   Parker Bowen

[b1] Man when the ball finally dropped for you at 17:50 I was so relieved :D FantasticFunk

[d4] But I guess that's easy for me to say when I've binging the series ^^ FantasticFunk

[a1] Christopher I love all your videos keep up the good work!Mr DizzyWoo B

[c2] In the video of mia u touched a flamethrower, in the other side of the house   Ivan Espinal

[c2] When she was escaping in a pile of trash   Ivan Espinal

[d3] The love-hate relationship one has with horror games.   FantasticFunk

[b1] 27:30 what was that sound? :)   exitthegame

[b1] 27:30 you ok odd?SpOmLoL

[a4] So are you going to swich to one episode per day and the bonus episodes yesterday where only for the start or will you upload multiple ones everyday? I'd really enjoy more than one per day but of course it's your choise (running a job too and all the other real life stuff can get pretty stressful I can imagen) Rao Ku

[d3] What's your day job out of interest?   Sam Davison

[a5] While watching you playing I realized that since a couple of months I have a powerfull laptop (friend of mine did some hardware update) so I said to myself, I will try the 'demo' to see if it runs well, and if so, I play it myself. Well, let's say it like this, the perfomance was very well, it is playable on my system, but holy shit, I hit 'ESC' after 5 minutes gameplay. Not in this life. Scary as hell :D   ScreeAT

[a5] I normally DO NOT like horror games and I've never played RE. And I will never play any horror game, but this one in particular is getting it spot on with survival/horror. The moments of you exploring vs the moments of terror are really well done. You never know when they're gonna strike, but you are just too curious M. vdB.

[a1] Mr. Odd, you can say 'fuck' all you like; if you feel it's appropriate, nobody can fucking stop you :)) Gabos

[c1][c2]   Use 1 of the stimulants at the area where you 1st came out into the yard, i.e. right after you go through the three headed dog door. It's a good spot trust me. frank Vallejo

[d4] where's the guy that posts the jumpscares, I need to know when not to pay close attention. ConejitaLuna

[a1] Glad to see that this series is getting you more fans! Been subscribed for long time because I love your attention to story. This game is really pumping some new life into Let's Play channels everywhere. evilmick66

[d2] I'm excited for when people will start speedrunning this game.
     FauxFoeBot

[d3] I think it's now at 96 minutes! crazy   FauxFoeBot

[d3] Right now I think the record is 2 hours and 8 minutes.\n\nSomeone
found an OoB.'   XboxDazzle

[a1][b2]   Really love the series and your gameplay, can't wait for the
next part ! \u003c3   Hiro Overdrive

[b2] send mooar pleaaaaaase   Dampeero Damp

[a1] Love your episodes man, I literally wait for the uploads. Great
job! frank Vallejo

[c2] I think if you get that flame thrower thingy you can burn those
nests and walk through the rooms? Magoskillz Magoskillz

[b2] God it immediately got worse. lol Vanessa Renne

[a1][b1]   Haven't left a comment in a while, wanted to say great
series! I love it when you do horror games.\n\nUm just got to that
giant wasps' nest at just after 12 min in - noooooooooo. no. no thanks.
glad you're playing and not me!   Vanessa Renne

[b2] YAYAYAYAY I'VE BEEN WAITING LLewella TM

[a1][a4]   I'm loving this series, and especially seeing you panicking.
Would've loved a Facecam though :/nasorus Vandark

[c2] BTW, Odd, I think you left some gunpowder back in the Crematory.
You picked it up the first time, but then you died, and the second time
you left it thereAchmeron

[a1][c1]   so maybe he should use the pills that make it easier to
detect items,that he never uses but just hoard =)\nbut i do love the lp
     Cain Marko

[c2] Achmeron and also he left the chem fluid in the grandmas room
     Mateusz Błaszczyk

[a1] Thank you for playing through this! Not gonna lie, I am way to
much of a baby to play this haha! Mekare 13

[a5] I couldn't imagine playing this game in VR. It's scary enough
watching it through a youtube video lol Fëanor Gaming

[d1] Gotta love it when resident evil turns into dishonored all of a
sudden   Camelopardus

[d4] ironmaidenmetalgod with the swarms of flies   Camelopardus

[d4] Camelopardus how?ironmaidenmetalgod

[d4] Nuke the entire site from orbit, its the only way to be sure!
     Sarah

[d4] You want zombie xenomorphs? Because that's how you get zombie
xenomorphs. Frost Archer

[d4] Game over man! Game over!   Alex Alden

[d4] Sarah Good luck on trying to make the USA goverment nuke it self
     Lel Lellel

[d4] Nuke the entire thing. If it doesn't work build a space ship and
put them on it and send them to space. Let the aliens deal with them Al
Bartolina

[d3] Thats a great question, would they survive a nuke? nasorus
Vandark

[a1] Why does ChristopherOdd not have a million subs yet?
     Grandmaster Kristian

[a1] because visibility of GREAT youtubers but smaller is not the best
at youtube, but having a little community and a great wone is beter
than a big one that isnt that great, since it'ss not his main job like
Blitz, that doesn't cause any problems, but if he decides to make of
youtube his full day job, he's gonna need to look into that, isn't it
Chris?   nasorus Vandark

[b1] That sound of sweet release when you get the back pack   Kroshcka
E

[b1] bag-gasm 22:17 XDDD   Steven Lim

[b2] damn i was keep checking if it is out now   Ameer Hamza

[b2] More more more more 🔥🔥🔥🔥   Ping

[a1][a2] [b2]   This is by far the best walkthrough of Resident Evil.
You are very thorough and very thoughtful of how you approach your
games. You can tell you are truly apprehensive and scared, which makes
my fear even more enhanced, and I love it! Plus you are taking the game
seriously and not OVER acting and trying to OVER entertain like other
YT creators. Keep it up, I look forward to the next upload.   Pdx
Paula

[d1] wow blood flies jumped games. from Dishonored to RE lol. AoKAY00

[d4] AoKAY00 Haha exactly what I thought when I saw them ^^   Rao Ku

[d2][a2]   So I am watching multiple people play this and I laugh at
how much others struggled with the hives(?) and Odd comes in with a
shot gun and Boom! it's gone. XD   Ana

바나나아나 Alexa? Lincoln Noronha [d5]

바나나아나 total waste tho   ironmaidenmetalgod   [d5]

[a1][c1]   there is a much better approach (hint: do not even try to deal with em until you get a certain weapon) but i'm not here to spoil or backseat game, i like his LP and his reactions and commentary are golden!   frank Vallejo

[a1] Chris is the best LPer in the world, no one is better!   Sarah

[a1] Thx for playing this gem   NVMΩΛMRΣTRΘ

[a1][b2]   YES !!!! I love this let's play so much, thank you Mr Odd !!! TheFloflo2204

[a1] For some reason I thought you said at one point, that you quit your actual job to focus on your channel. Maybe that was just a hopeful dream (so that you'd be doing nothing else but uploading videos!). Anyway, enjoying this playthrough plenty!   Glots -

[b2] Spiders and giant wasps... f*ck this sh*t, I'm outta here.   Cocky Bastard

[d4] Leidenfrost hmmm... why?   Guvs Hammerstein

[d1] Never look up Earth Defense Force 4.1 then   Leidenfrost

[c2] One of the biggest flying bugs found has a wing span of 21cm (8.4 inches). Not sure if the mosquitos in this game are larger or smaller, but around a similar size is my wager. So the creepy thing is, it's not completely out of this world.   Smilomaniac

[d4] Not even mutants that's just how big they are in Louisiana. Still not as bad as Northwestern Canadian mosquitos, which just carry cattle and the occasional small child away never to be seen again.   Chris Badger

[d3] Yeah - I hate wasps too. I once was standing on the shore of a small lake, and notice some stinging in my legs. Looking down i realized I was standing in a huge wasp nest. My legs where covered with angry yellow/black wasps (European species). The rest of that day passed rather muzzy and painful for me. It took me several day's to fully recover.\n\nSo - yeah... At the other hand, I do not fear spiders at all... John Kloosterman

[a1] Loving this series   HoosierBoi

[b2] How long till next upload?   HoosierBoi

[a1][b2]   The let's play is good enough I guess. Only thing that really bugs me is the way you waste your ammo ...   BaconOctopus

[d6] He'ss in panic mode a lot, i can understand him (looking at myself...). nasorus Vandark

[a1] Thankyou so much for this series! My favourite Lets Plays on YT, and this one is outstanding. Can't afford Resi7 but vicariously there on the edge of my seat with you � Cat Treadwell

[b1] Flamethrower !!! tomkill2m

[c1] Great series but I think you're overusing your healing items, check your watch to see your health bar!   Chris McDonald

[a1][a2]   Really great walk through! You play it the way I would, by exploring and checking things out instead of just rushing through it! Plus you don't cry and scream like most youtubers do while playing this game! Georgios Tsikriteas

[d3] Cash me ousside, how bou dah?   WrathOfNolla

[a1] Best walkthrough on YT!   Martin Latour

[d4] Martin Latour Haters gonna hate! Don't listen to him!   Stabby McStabberson

[a3] El capitane Your face is dumb and you smell like water. Clutch Bert

[a3] Martin Latour cock sucker   El capitane

[s1] \u003c3   ChristopherOdd

[c2] oh you need the flamethrower for the bugs   DJ120

[c2] still wasting shotgun ammo after picking up the flamethrower tho   ironmaidenmetalgod

[d4] Get Rekt. nasorus Vandark

[d4] ChristopherOdd savage Kroshcka E

[s1] Oh. You need to keep watching.   ChristopherOdd

[b2] am I the only one who screams at the screen acting like he can hear me   DEANDRE Savage

[b2] Burn it down. Burn it all down.   Dennis Costello

[b1] when you said 'oh, hello' to the bra �� Naomie

[d4] I guess he doesnt do the laundry often. ;)   Sarah

[a1][a4]   Lots of new viewers watching this series mate , keep up the good work . As a new viewer we appreciate the 2 videos a day � Greg Horrell

[a1] Never would have guessed that this game would turn out to be one of my favorite let's play series that you have done! These get so intense haha   Fëanor Gaming

[a1] lovin the series chris. keep knocking them out :) mason malsall

[b2] Damn I am getting nightmares just by watching this... still can't stop!!! o.O Bastian Blankemeier

[b2] Yay new Episode been waiting for it loving the series so far   Davengr

[d3] glenn dies VG primo

[a1] looooovvvveeee iiittttt! Keep up the great work, Odd!   Noctus 420

[a1][b2]   Yassss was totally waiting for this next ep! Love your LPs   lightlybattered

[a1] love ur RE7 videos man :D great voice :P   SmartBoxable

[a1][b2]   Been waiting for the continuation, very good job with this playthrough!   Asura

[d1] Dude, you should play Penumbra,   BASS THUNDER

[d2] He did already\nEDIT: Im stupid, thought of another guy :P   Blizzard Gamers

[a1] loving your gameplay so much Aquibur Rahman Khan

[a1] perfect timing ! Nice. just finished 6th.   TheSandeldiino

[d4] hallo Aaron Aguayo

[d4] Aaron Aguayo Guten tag!   BASS THUNDER

[b2] Yessssss   Joey Alexander

[a1][d2]   Found your LP because Achievement Hunter talks too much. Keep up the good work! whatxdrivesxthexweak

[b1] I dare say that foul wench doth appeared out of the ether upon climbing the flight of stairs. A woman with her ghastly qualities certainly did not fail to stimulate my adrenal glands.   Jesse Barron

[d4] funny thing is odd this has nothing to do with resident evil or the mutation that's just how people in the south are   ien mantistobogan

[b1] Epic Marjorie impersonation skills. nicely done lol Dread Knight

[a1] im so glad i can just sit back and watch   MR. Ant

[b1] that voice was a little to good hope this game isn't possessing
you man kinda scared the shit outta me MR. Ant

[a1] Odd, man you are too brave. What a hero.   Lowzenza

[b1] knowing that jump scare was coming made it a million times
funnier. i had to also re-watch it like 5 times.   A lexy

[a1][b1]   OMG! That reading you did at 10 minutes. AMAZING! Keep up
the great work. Dallas Doan

[a5] There was something strange, graphically, with the centipedes.
They look similar to older, pre-rendered backgrounds. I don't really
know how to feel about it.   Abor Dis

[b2] patheticPATHETICpATHeTIc;lasdjfaej;ajkf!!! that was hilarious XD
      John Parungao

[a1] Your videos are lit as amazing as insane I really like them you
are doing a great job keep goin   The.passenger

[a5][c2]   I haven't finished this video so he might have figured this
out \n\nSo while marguerite is patrolling she we'll yell 'ah-ha' and
'Their you are' and I thought this was really fucking clever because
she's yelling that even though she's hasn't actually figured out where
you are and that's fucking scary as shit because when you figure that
out your paranoid because you don't know if she found you or is trying
to bait you to run and reveal where you are. Really clever capcom
really clever   sin account

[b1] Your Marguerite impression @10min was pretty great hahaha.
      Allana Hollingsworth

[d4] I wish there was an option in horror games to just... leave. Like
when 'they' tell you 'you can't be here' or 'you don't belong here',
there should be like a 'sad ending' where you just say 'fuck this shit'
and leave to live your life as it never happened. TheReal Minus25

[b1] Odds Margriette voice LOL   PinkRibbonScars11

[d3] Are you Canadian or from Minnesota? Cause you sound like you are.
      House Of Insanity

[b2] Stealth with ChristopherOdd, always carry around a flamethrower
when sneaking XD Flavour Flavoured Flavour

[b1] 4:29 *I'll melt a bitch if I have to.*\nNice x)   Ulysse Z

[b1] Your Marguerite impression is so on point I actually got some
chills, nice.   alwayscommenting56

[a1][b1]   I practically jumped out of my chair when Marguerite popped
out just as you were going to use the crow key for the first time. This

is the first Resident Evil that I probably won't play, so thanks for playing it for me to watch. Mike Welsh

[b1] Oh God that jump scare. I threw my phone and now my chest hurts like crazy..   MrTaylork1

[a1] love ur videos soo entertainment and a real gameplay 🎮🎮   sayed ahmed

[d2] This is one of the few times where radbrad fucks up less times than Chris, kinda rare scott bryant

[a1][a2]   I love your approach to Let's Plays. Thorough, and not loud or obnoxious. You've gained a new subscriber, and i'm loving this series.   Oscar Vargas

[c2] there's shotgun shells under the trailer in the back   bernie lee

[b1] I fucking lost it when you said I'll melt a bitch if I have to.   Shelly Pacman

[b2] Yeah, this right here is why I'm *watching* this, not playing it. Bugs? Bugs. Nope.Iskandar

[b1][d4]   I like how the momma is pissed off because you probably woke her up from her beauty nap. Just like a real mom. Shes gonna give you a nasty whoopin' Chris. Also, damn, as someone who owns PSVR i couldnt imagine how scary 6:19 would be in VR   Javi B

[d1] hey everyone, just for fun whats your fave series of ODD's? my personal fave is SOMA because of all the interesting discussion about the games concept and the awesome narrative of the game itself. whats yours?   Kevin Cox

[b1] I like how he says 'I'll melt a b**ch if I have to' and then she actually does melt.   James Justus

[b1] I Screamed loud enough that my daughters came upstairs to see if I was ok.. Crimson Ninroot

[b2] Thank you so much for hitting the bobble heads with your knife, instead of your bullets! 🔪🔪 I was so happy when I saw you use the knife Christopher odd. Indica Blue

[c7] 'Daddy right? Mind if I borrow mommy for a bit?' I keep getting the impression that maybe Mia was pregnant and gave birth while she was being held in the house. There's also that creepy little girl in the part where you control Mia when she's running from Marguerite that said 'This way mommy'. If my hunch is right, what happened to the child? I assume it died...RedVelvetReaper

[d5] the whole thing with the special child, is very reminiscent of alessa   Kevin Cox

[b1] epic jumpscare at 19:20   Kevin Cox

[b1] 'Motherfucker! Jesus H. Fuck!' may never be topped, as far as outbursts go, on this channel. Genuine shitting of the pants on that one, and it was hilarious. Good series!   Patrick Rivas

[b1] Dude she literally appeared out of nowhere I saw her phase in lol   Falledd

[a1] Voice acting by Odd... AMAZING!   pauloninjinha

[b1] im actually going mental watching this game\nthe fuckin woman jumpscare woke me up \nwent fro 0 to 10000 no time kris Carlisle

[b1] 9:15 lol, you just more and more 'evil witch' as that went on! Love it :) Konradkurze

[b1] 0:17 Easily the best jumpscare in the game! XD   James Justus

[d4] It certainly was. PsychoFish64

[d4] I did! I just said the one towards the beginning was the best because I thought it was funny. :) James Justus

[b1] Did you watch the whole video? I jumped so hard on a later point PsychoFish64

[a1][b2]   Thank you for posting these videos I really enjoy watching you play them they make me laugh whenever you jump haha Nifty Storme

[c2] Just pointin out that Ethan has had his phone the whole time so he could just phone for help but noooo.....   IrishFrosty

[c2] IrishFrosty do we know that the phone was not taken away when he was knocked out? \n\nThe game has slightly odd logic like the film van was parked outside the house the whole time you think people would notice. I have watched two lets plays of this now I don't know how that van got there seeing as there is no road \n\nThe time line I don't know if it makes sense \n\nYou would think someone would come looking for that massive boat at the end those things are worth 10's if not 100's of millions Dean Mottershead

[d4] IrishFrosty Verizon don't care bout your zombie problems   rav3style

[c2] IrishFrosty It's entirely possible there's no data. It's a rural area after all. Xin Guan

[c2] you have the shortest memory span ever. how do you not remember the larger the mother was holding the entire time Reginald Cooper

[a1] Wow Chris, ever considered doing voice acting?   Baubaz

[a1] you're an amazing youtuber   Lauren Burke

[b1] Now she's in the house! NOW SHE'S IN THE HOUSE!!!! lol Zane
Alexander

[c2][s2]   heads up there a special scene that plays back at episode 3
that most player miss this also let you know more about the healing
items ability\n\nDuring my 3rd run of the game i if grandpa see you and
you lure him back then try to run and get the hatch key he will bust
through the wall not only that if you try to rush pass him he will grab
you through you back and then chop off your leg and then sit at the
other end of the room with a healing item where you use to reattach
your cut off leg dark the blind

[d3] Whenever you say Crow Key, I hear 'Kuroky' :p\nNot many people
will get this reference.   TheAzertjuh

[d3] Ay it's ya boi Doto references   Yabbamann

[a5][c1]   Chris, if you haven't turn on the virtual 3D surround sound
thing in the menu. It really helps with getting an idea of where they
are. Jumpscares feel a lot scarier too when you can actually hear them
behind you :\u003e   SK1PTER

[b1] 12:02 when he opened the door and the mannequin was there. I
think my heart fell out. Oh my God.   Dedra Perkins

[b2] posttt moreee I watched all eps   glinebullyz

[a1][c1]   Great playthrough! Cant wait for another episode. But you do
realize there's 'quick turn' and 'block' mechanics? Might help you in
combat :)   DoktorKluns

[b1] Hiding spot, hiding spot! ..while holding a 'candle' in your
hand.. XD Idk why but that bit was just funny to me x) ... I should be
studying.. bleh..kuffeine

[b2] wow, this game is intense.   Jimbo Johnes

[c1] chris don`t buy the magnum gun u only get one bullet,and u can`t
find or make the bullets. end it`s not good ! the schotgun is youre
best one.   cuba libra

[a1] This LP series, omg so good! plz keep em comming MrOdd kind sir!
u do everything right! XD   Kristian Jansson

[a1] Chris Odd would make a great voice actor   Waseem Ahmed

[c2] Mr. Odd, don't forget that the main house had a Raven door on the
second floor. (By the Rec. room I think.)   mongojr100

[c2] you missed the scene when you should look down that hole for the
light... there's a action scenes down there   W EMANuel

[d4] W EMANuel yeah I followed her when I saw her Loki Laufeyson

[a1][d2]   I used to watch RadBrad but he was never actually good at games, you actually play them and explore not just plow through them and upload ASAP Glad i came across your channel for good content. Cheers.   fallenhope1

[c2] Go back to the main house with the crow/eagle key!!!! You have a lock there Chris Konushevci

[a1][c7]   this may have been discussed before but what if Zoe is actually grandma? what if grandma is not an old person, but her mutation affected her differently.or maybe they did something to her so that she cannot leave.we know zoe wants to leave, we know she needs our help,she lived there so she knows where everything is right? but what if she needs our help coz she cannot move. we saw a grandma's room but lbr,everyone has a grandma,that doesn't mean that grandma is actually grandma. \nZoe seems to know where we are all the time, so she is watching us right? as grandma in her chair,always moves her head with our movement. she is watching.plus, she kinda helps us everytime we see her.she was at the table watching us, she was upstairs kinda showing us that what we need is behind that door and she was outside the room when we came out the basement. it's doesn't make lots of sense but i think it could work zoe being grandma.\n\nthat or she is the last boss. either is fine. or maybe she is Eveline. ugh so many questions\n\nalso mia must be related somehow to the bakers.were the bakers the family she was babysitting for? \n\ni have so many theories.i love this game so much and you're doing a great job.love your playthroughs as always. you're awesome Odd   Amalia Fameliari

[b2] ma is alot scarier than pa, i'd say   TiteufVelinov

[b1] how does she come out of nowhere like that??? aaaaaah holy fuck!!   TiteufVelinov

[a1] I guess once you go Odd, you never go back. I found your LPs are the best and everyone seems not that entertaining anymore, lol.   Alexius Aditya

[b1] Because the constant flame you're carrying around doesn't give away your position at all XD Ray of Insanity Gaming

[b1] You should read everything in that voice for horror games XD   GirlWithTheBlueBlood

[c5] Man your sense of direction is really bad. Hahaha.\nAny particular reason?   Raziel Wolf

[c6] Raziel Wolf He's playing a horror game with giant bugs, pretty sure I'd be the same way :P prosyndication21

[b1] Lmaoo 'I wanna show you somethin- OKAY you piece of shit I've had enough of you!' Kathryn Free

[b1] 9:21 I fucking died   IThe AuthorityI

[d4] Sorry, I didn't attend your funeral lol...jk DX_Kidjal

[b1] 'Where is Rachel! Where is she!' :)   fendelphi

[a4][a5]   The fact that I can watch one of these every morning by breakfast and every evening after dinner is phenominal \u003c3\n\nI wasn't sure at first but this truly feels like Resident Evil to me now, I'm almost tempted to go play it myself thanks to this LP and that's a first for me with a modern day horror game. Ty Bey

[c2] It's mine it's mine it's mine light... the lantern bug lady has   AleFaza

[b2] These psycho-stimulants are actually really good! Slimie

[b2] moreeeeee glinebullyz

[a1] I love how when he reads the letter he slowly changes his voice and it gets creepier as it goes   Silvia Chen

[c2][d1]   When chris plays x com 2 he is so smart, but when he plays this game he is so dumb. 'My light! My light!' of course she is carrying the lantern to balance the scale. ▯ Ted _hi

[d2] Yeah. I know that guy. He plays for views. Every video he says if i get this much amount of views i will continue the series otherwise i won't. He never completes series.   Ted _hi

[a1][d2]   If you really want to see how a dummy plays this game go watch theRadBrad, nice guy but he can't figure out a two piece puzzle to save his life. Chris is doing a great job. FauxFoeBot

[b2] Lol. Keep uploading :)   Ted _hi

[s1] +Ted _hi yea what a dumb ass that guy. ChristopherOdd

[b1] Damn it, that lady made me almost damn shit my self.   Darkrajin

[a1] Really entertaining, thank you for uploading! Gábor Szilassy

[d4] I thought that message from Margarite was a Trump tweet.   robofish312

[b1] 19:22... my phone literally went flying out of my hands. 'Jesus-H-FUCK'   Mr._ Pistol

[a1] OH MY GOD PLEASE DO MORE VOICE ACTING. masterofmyfate31

[a1][a4]   Odd, I've always been a fan. You have the most genuine let's plays on You Tube. Having been on that side, too, of making gaming videos and editing them and uploading them, my question is how do you find the time to upload 2 a day? Patrick Null

[b1] OMG, when she jumped out at 19:20, I screamed like a little girl.
:-)   Patrick Null

[b1] ''I'll melt a bitch if I have to' ChristopherOdd 2017
      JackOfAllBlades

[c5] JackOfAllBlades can we please make Montage of mr. odd sayings lol
      infinite0mega

[a1][a4][c7]   Maybe it's kind of virus name like T- Virus, C-Virus
and now D Type of Virus. Love and enjoy your playthrough here. Wanna
asked to about your computer spec here. Proc, Motheeboard, VGA, RAM?
Thanks!   Novian Kurnia

[a1][b2]   Man I love your play through of this, but hoh boy are those
gross blobby growths messin with my trypophobia lol ChocolateMilkLOL

[a1] Odd normally I will keep these things to my self but why didn't
you get the FUCKEN lantern that was in the hole, which the FUCKEN
regenerating immortal mom and her fucked up bugs are? just putting this
out there, love your videos man keep it up.   Mister Turtle

[b1] Goddamnit. When she popped out in front of the crow door I
panicked so hard. Jesus Christ. xAx;   Scarrr

[a5] this game far underachieves my expectations for an fps resident
evil in 2017, but then again this is exactly what i should shave
expected from capcom   TheInfinitystar1

[a5] TheInfinitystar1 the story dissapointed as well, but I still sort
of enjoyed the game   Loki Laufeyson

[a1] New to the channel, just wanted to say this play through is
awsome!   FedeSalazarS

[a1][b1]   Your voice when reading the letter outside the upstairs door
hahahaha oh my god Chris. You are a gem.   insidia

[a1][d3]   Today's episodes really helped me out. I can't tell you how
much I appreciate your content, you are like the perfect youtuber to
play video games, being not obnoxious or loud. \nMy poor kitty went
into insulin shock today and I had to leave him at the vet overnight
and I'm waiting for news. This really helped me take my mind off of it.
Thank you so much. Can't wait for more. Breanerd

[d4] +Breanerd I really hope your kitty gets better soon. And Chris, I
would like to meet Dexter!   Exekiel Dominguez

[s1] +Breanerd I hope he does ok. My bulldog Dexter has had his fair
share of medical problems. Multiple surgeries, infections, digestive
issues, you name it. But we always do anything we can for our pets ya
know? You're being a good owner even though you think he might be
scared there. He knows you love him.   ChristopherOdd

[b1] 'I'll melt a bitch if I have too' I nearly spit my drink out when you said that hahah   Fëanor Gaming

[d1] Dude, Beat the game, Don't let the game beat you. i've been watching you for over a year now and i think you've only quit 3 games to my knowledge. You beat Alien: Isolation, you beat Outlast, you can beat Resident Evil 7. ShockerCyclone

[d1] ChristopherOdd I hope you do. it's getting good and I'm not into horror games that much. BTW Half-life beat me. I used cheats for the last half of the games. I'm better now. ShockerCyclone

[s1] +ShockerCyclone why wouldn't I beat the game ChristopherOdd

[b1] Not a fucking fan of those centipedes. Not one bit. Kubeface

[c2] Try the broken handgun on the scale with the lantern!
      Christopher Chute

[a1] I love how you just play the game like a normal person would. You dont overreact or scream nonsense or fake reactions like so many other youtubers. Keep it up chris! Tim L.

[b1] 'I'll melt a bitch if I have to.' lol   Yuyuka8

[a1] I can't wait until the next episode LOL!!! Landon Bear Runner

[b2] I'm so torn because I can't stop watching these as soon as they come out, but I'm getting the game later and I don't want to spoil any more than I already have!   Jman0623

[d4] Jman0623 Think of it as: 'Odd gets scared shitless first so I know when to have a new pair of diapers to put on.' prosyndication21

[b1] (24:20) Son, promise me you'll never go to Hati Kirbymonic

[d1] Why is there a Sectoid in the briefcase?   Fluffy Knight

[c2] use the sims by the trailer lots of good loot Donkey Kong Jr.

[b1] 4:29- *'I'll melt a bitch if I have to.'*- Chris Odd, 2017. What a badass. A regular Plumbus

[b1] A regular Plumbus Def my favorite line in this video
      infinite0mega

[b1] A regular Plumbus thought I was only one who noticed that line lol Zoe Doe

[c2] There are still some crow door at the house you haven't open yet might try open it maybe worth some hidden items?   Raven Cruz

[d3] Is YouTube your full time job or do you have another job? Just curious. Conner Elliott

[d4] 19lazyboy91 ok thanks Conner Elliott

[d3] he has a another job   19lazyboy91

[c1] Just a thought...that is some highly fire resistant wood. You'd have thought a flamethrower would burn the whole house down   NMGSGaming

[b1] 6:33\n\nMe, when I hear the little noise: 'If that child shows up again, I am so going to shoot it in the face.'   TheCommunistGamer

[c1] Chris I think PsychoStimulants work as there are certain items that become available to you while the stimulant is active.   Turtl3VG (JaydenB Games)

[b1][b2]   Oh, that's a nice way to start a video. (Very sarcastic when saying this)\n\nOut of curiosity, how many people, after watching this video, feel the need to spend hours in the showers for decontamination? Big bugs, colonies of spiders and questionable gooey stuff? Yep, definitely need some decontamination.\n\nGod I don't know which one is worse, the father who comes at us with the biggest weapon he could get his hands on, one bigger than the other or the mother who keeps sending creepies and crawlies at us. Wonder what the son is going to throw at us next.\n\n10:08 Okay, just to be clear what I'm going to say it's not out of malice of whatsoever, but I really can't help myself and have to say it. WHAT THE HELL ODD?! *Follow by knocking the head a little* Seriously, who in their right mind just bloody finish voicing a maniac's message and then in under a sec says, 'Holy shit.' You're the one who went psycho on us there!   Yuna Blaze

[a1][b1]   Lol, that voice over during reading tho! You should do voice work for a game character!   Sarah

[c2] That one fat crazy woman has the lantern   Tmb Atrex

[b1] 'I'll melt a bitch if I have to'. Odd, you're a god damn treasure.   SofaJockey

[b1] Damnit, old hag jump scare make me fell off my chair...   PoemiiReine

[a1] Christopher, I literally comeback like every hour or two just too see if you uploaded another episode. Thaannnkk youuu.   LLewella TM

[a1] You are incredible . I need to see more videos of resident evil . !   Pablo Artero

[a1] This is like watching a really good tv series. I just want a new episode!!! Ping

[d3] Where are you from? I can tell you have an accent, but I can't place it!   Sierra Pugh

[c1] I think the best time to use the Stimulants is probably right after you kill off a family member and the whole area is walkable without worrying about running into a family member. That way you can search for the hard to find items by quickly running through the whole area unobstructed.   Darc Devel

[b2] Oh my god Chris, you stop to think and craft in the most exposed spots, I'm blaming you for this knot in my stomach! XD   TheTechnicalNirl

[a1][b1]   nice voice acting at 9:52! enjoying the commentary and game play like always. Keep up the solid work my man!   mike hawkins

[a1] Keep loading moreRedshift

[b1] 'I'll melt a bitch if I have to' 🤣🤣🤣 had me in tears omg 😭   Aliyah Xox

[a3] The only thing that I don't like about this series is that you look at the map too much.   RandomJonah45

[b2] RandomJonah45 and wastes bullets like if this was cod.   ironmaidenmetalgod

[a1][b1]   Hahaha the voice reading the note, I'm done Chris you're awesome   a zee

[b1] Yes, I squealed like a little pig when that dam mom jumped out. eeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeh!matt berl

[b1] you said 'apple watch' 😂   Naomie

[b1] when you looked down the hole the lantern was there then you looked away for a split second and it was gone. thats fuckin scary   youthful juice

[c2] ChristopherOdd you should look down that time ... as it activates a scene   W EMANuel

[s1] Wait until the beginning of tomorrow's episode.   ChristopherOdd

[c5] What took it?! D:Miasma

[c6] It would have been scarier if he had looked at what took it, trust me   retnuHDJ

[a1][c2]   Before you go further, go back to the other house and open the other crow doors!!! Absolutely hooked on this and that dramatic reading was incredible!   Becci Atkinson

[d3] Oh yeah there's a VR verssion of this... GREAT   nasorus Vandark

[d1] Hey Odd, Id really like to see you giving a try on 'Cry of Fear', a free halflife mod, but its one of the best horrorgames ever made. Sure, graphics are outdated, but the atmosphere that is set in that masterpiece is really something you should try out :D   Felsbrocken

[a1] Neeeeed moreeee great video Burnt Toast

[a1] Chris is better than 90% of the other let's players that have been playing this game, but I wonder if people that are playing this game have some sort of reaction time problem or are playing with their feet. B HB

[a1] [b2] heyhey another episode, on the edge of my seat all the way through, great series. greetings from The Netherlands   Julian De Block

[b1] Barely 30 seconds in and I'm already super tense! SammyS S

[b2] can we get 1 more episode today please MURDER MAN MARCUS

[b1] Chris, you're reading voice is creepier than than the z-ladys xd   wretchebidzy

[d1] So far I'm wondering just how much this game is filling Chris with dread compared to Outlast or Alien Isolation. Arkane

[d5] Arkane s   n0ize1

[a1] hope you like the game so far chris really enjoy your content :)   luckee john

[b1] Those centipedes though 🤢   LobnBullets

[a1] This game is getting into your head man... You are better and better, video by video! :D Keep it up! Bocsi Gabor

[a1] So, so very creepy, Chris you know how to set the vibe 👌👌👌   Reilly Sheehan

[b1] Ok, you could totally see her spawn in at the thing at 19:25.   Rocket Launching Llama

[c5] you did u go through the wall again bridge was up   Edward B

[c6] Probably to avoid the crazy bug-bitch   dannybell223

[c2] If I remember correctly... There was that crow door at the main house... just pointing that out if you end up there somehow... Diego Inacio

[b1] the way you read that letter had me crying 😭😭 Naomie

[b2] Can't wait for the rest.   Johan van Rooyen

[c2] she screamed out 'its my light', so probably have to fight her and get it from her.   ijediassassin

[c7] ijediassassin im thinking first episode, crow in the microwave, something to do with it ?   Julian De Block

[b2] yesss! I was just like 'waiting for ep8.. that's all I'm living for' and I got my wish TuT yay!   Souki

[a4] Could you turn the brightness down a bit please?   Sany Suny

[a1] odd you are 10/10Rodrigo Victorio

[d3] who else rewatches all the episode every time he uploads a new one   DEANDRE Savage

[d4] DEANDRE Savage ???   The ChillyWinds

[b1] I love the stealthy crouch walking carrying a lit flamethrower.   DezOrwell

[c2] if you go back to the first house, there was a crow door with the grenade launcher behind it. I remember seeing it through the glasses surrounding the door! Roberto Rossi Menegotto

[c7] We got our virus name it sounds like. D.   Amenon1994

[b1] Sweet mother of Lord.... I literally threw my phone away when the lady showed up and pushed you into that pit.... that major FBomb so far... Diego Inacio

[b1] I jumped back in my couch. Holy hell. Can't remember a movie giving me such a jump scare for ages.   PsychoFish64

[b1] Exactly! I'm glad I was sitting down on the couch because I literally let go of my tablet for a few second because I was so startled and basically jumped in my seat haha SammyS S

[a1][b2]   Yay!! Another part! Are you going to upload more today? Thanks soo much and I really enjoy your Let's Play. Pia Auteried

[a1] oh my lord that reading was wonderful   Link Henderson

[a1][d2]   This LP is freakin great, You actually take the game seriously! Not like pewdiepie and those guys who is just sitting there screaming.. Great work dude, awesome that you post 2 videos each day   Emil Prestjaard

[a1] Odd immerses himself in his games like no other.   Clayton Sturm

[a1] I don't mind watching those channels when I want to be entertained. They serve their purpose very well. But when I want to watch someone take a game seriously, I come here. masterofmyfate31

[a1][a2][d2]   Yep, Odd is best player, he looks everywhere to find stuff, reads notes... you can tell that he's really into this game. I'm always enjoying watching him play. and like you said pew is rushing and missing lots of stuff...   Igor Maričić

[d2] Emil Prestjaard pew dude has no curiosity. its so rushed.   ironmaidenmetalgod

[b2] As soon as i stop watching one another one uploads! IM SO HAPPY   ZeroDpi

[a1] Love the roleplay voice acting lol :D   Underdog Art

[b2] omg wtf I just came here to check if you had uploaded anything new   .

[b2] Had your yt page open for a while and been pressing refresh every 30 mins or so   Vepa Durdiyev

[a1] Your channel is better than Netflix   Georgios Tsikriteas

[d3] I've done ChristofferOdd and chill during the second season of XCOM 2 lol. ROS Intake

[d4] Damn, that image is stuck in my head... Kobi

[s1] Pics or it didn't happen.   ChristopherOdd

[d3] Well I am literary doing ChristofferOdd and chill right now. Just so you know.   Ola Dahl

[s1] ChristopherOdd and Chill.\nWait. No. Don't do that. ChristopherOdd

[b2] Finally! :D Georgios Tsikriteas

[b2] yay! MisterMusic

[d5] *click* noice   Spencer Wyer

[d5] Spencer Wyer Noice   Jack Richards

[d5] Spencer Wyer 𐄂𐄂𐄂 Jack Richards

[a1] You are incredible. Just wanted to say this. Daniel S

[a1] Hey great video Jack Richards

[b2] Nice! Legion Prime

[b2] YESSSS!!! AnTiCs53

[s1] Might be an F bomb or two in this one. My bad. Bonus points to those people who can count them all.   ChristopherOdd

[b1] Wow...Chris...I have been pretty 'cool' watching these videos
UNTIL...\nThat crazy old wench jumped out and threw you into the
pit.\nMAN...I almost fell off my stool...Seriously.\nScared the hell
out of me...LOL\nFirst time that this game made me jump like that....
      OldDood

[a1] Chris, don't worry about it. This is an M rated where the
characters curse all the time. We're all big boys and girls here.
      Pascal Barrientos

[c2] Don't you forget that you can use Crow key back at house for
maybe some cool items :)   Askalpone

[c1] Christ, you said you would use pschy.....the thing that hight-
lights item. DON'T. It is best when you use it to round up item you
initially missed AFTER you beat the boss. You'd pretty much have access
to most of the surrounding areas and have no or small hostile to bother
you. Jang YOO

[c4] I did a lot on on that area too, it's completely fine.   Jack
Okami

APPENDIX III: Transcripts of the Dark Souls playthrough segments by
Christopher Odd & Masterkizz

Christopher Odd, Dark Souls LP, Part 25, Sen's Fortress

11:20 – 16:50 (segment length = five minutes and thirty seconds)

Observes giant swinging axes upfront immediately upon entering the hall:
- Oh! Oh Jesus, I thought that was like a… monster.
Surveys the area more carefully – there is a narrow bridge under the axes that crosses a large pit:
- Oh this is good! **ironic voice**
*Breaks some junk in the left corner of hall **looking for loot**; camera lingers on an item located on a balcony above that corner; reads message left in beginning of the bridge:*
- Sorrow. Yeah, I see that…
Attempts hesitantly to go by first axe and goes back:
- Jeez!
Goes through first two axes and stops; observes an enemy at the end of path:
- Oh no, look at that! Are you kidding?!
Gets hit by lightning bolt coming from above and to his right:
- Oh no!
Lifts shield and gets hit a second time:
- How the hell..?
Blocks third bolt and turns camera backwards:
- OK, I need… I need to leave!
Blocks fourth bolt, goes by second axe, gets hit by another bolt in the back; rolls slowly through first axe, drinks an estus flask:
- Go! **speaking to player character in 3rd person**
SCENE +>
Arrives back at the beginning of hall:
- Alright, how am I gonna deal with that thing?
Goes back and forth for a bit:
- I'm gonna need to use arrows I think…
Pulls out bow and aims at enemy swinging lightning bolts from a platform above the other side of the pit, which get caught in axes and other objects hanging from the ceiling; begins firing arrows at the enemy, some of which also hit the swinging axes:
- Can he not hit me from here?
Indeed no bolts seem to reach him at this current position; keeps firing arrows:
- I'm barely doing any damage to him, but… my alternative is to run… but I see one is at the very end…
Stops firing arrows and returns to beginning of bridge:
- I almost wonder… maybe I should grab the one that's at the very end and see if he'll get knocked off by these things.
Aims and fires at enemy at the other end of bridge:
- That's an option.
Hits wall behind enemy who turns around to face the noise's direction:
- If I can hit him.
Hits enemy with an arrow:
- Let's see if he'll come… Here he comes!

Enemy turns back around and begins running towards Odd bypassing the first axe on his side:

- Look at him!

Enemy gets hit by second axe and falls over in pit:

- There we go! Sick! [laughs] Yes!

Looks down in pit for the first time:

- Is he dead?

Sees enemy getting up from the ground and crossing diagonally under the bridge:

- Oh he's not even dead!

Can no longer see enemy; pulls out the bow again:

- Now he's gonna be haunting me… He'll come back when I least expect it. ***sets up a future situation for the audience***

Begins firing arrows at lightning bolt enemy again; one arrow pushes the enemy back enough that it also falls from the platform:

- Oh, sweet! K, I didn't expect that one.

Receives souls and moves to the beginning of bridge again:

- At least that gives me a little bit of breathing room.

SCENE +>

Looks down in the pit again and notices a large enemy at the bottom to his right:

- Oh look at that! That's another one of those big… uhh… stone demon things!

Hears footsteps, looks up at the balcony with the item to his left; sees enemy on it:

- Oh he came all the way up here!

Enemy jumps down from balcony; Odd goes back to face it:

- Oh they actually did find a way, good for them! ***uses a gender neutral pronoun revealing lack of knowledge of current enemy types***

Blocks first attack with shield; his first scimitar swing gets through, the second is blocked by enemy's shield; pulls back a bit, enemy misses, Odd goes for a double attack with the scimitar which lands, but also get hit as that fails to stagger the enemy:

- Damn it!

Moves backwards, avoiding a head bite and enemy's next swing; drinks an estus flask; blocks an attack, lands one of his own; blocks another attack, lands yet another one of his own, and follows it with a second swing, which kills the enemy before it can retaliate; receives souls:

- Now where's your counterpart though?

makes a mistake as he already received souls for the other enemy, meaning it died from the fall

Goes through first two axes again, goes through third axe, but hesitates; third axe hits him and knocks him off the bridge's right side:

- Ohh! I'm dead!

SCENE +>

Fall doesn't kill him; damage resistance buff activates from low health status; sees that the demon begins moving slowly towards him; a lightning bolt from somewhere hits ground next to him:

- Oh shit, ohh shit!

Rolls behind bridge pillar; drinks an estus flask; demon appears behind corner of pillar; Odd moves behind other side of pillar:

- Why am I like… drudgingly slow in here?!
Attempts to keep pillar between him and demon; notices a small archway in corner of pit:
- You know what? I'm outta here!
Begins running towards archway:
- That guy made it back up, so can I.
Goes in a small room, finds a ladder going up and begins climbing it:
- Hoh! OK, at least it's not a sudden death.
Keeps going up the ladder:
- But I do wonder where that other one went, that was… that we knocked off the… the top. That was lunging the lightning attacks at us… ***discussion is related to the omission of receiving the souls made earlier***
Reaches balcony:
- Actually this kinda works, because now I can get this thing.
Collects item {Large Soul of a Proud Knight}; jumps down back at start of hall; goes back to beginning of bridge.
SCENE +>
- OK, let's just… take it slow…
Goes through first two axes again and stops:
- I almost wonder if I should try to get through both of these at the same time…
Runs successfully through third and fourth axe:
- Yep.
Keeps running over the bridge; sees an item perched on a balcony across pit to his right, this time lower than bridge's height; looks around:
- Now how… OK I guess there's a room back there, so maybe… I can find a way around?
Goes through fifth and final swing axe reaching a narrow corridor with statues that goes along the edge of pit; rolls into and breaks some items in right end of corridor – a dead end:
- Why am I all of a sudden rolling really slowly?
Rolls again:
- Like what happened?
Opens inventory menu:
- Oh, I bet you it's my shield!
Switches shield with a smaller one and rolls again; the roll is indeed faster:
- Yeah that my shield just put me right over the limit I guess…
Goes to left end of corridor and finds a staircase going up and to the left, across pit's side; turns back:
- And let me see, because we know there's a room down there, maybe there's secret walls?
Goes back to right end of corridor and swings at the corner's walls:
- Apparently I missed some secret walls in Blighttown…
Returns to left end of corridor and begins climbing the staircase:
- In the big tree or something?
SCENE +>
Staircase ends with an archway to the left leading to another narrow bridge across the pit, crossing over the first one; Odd goes out on bridge and observes a set of four axes swinging from the ceiling:
- Oh these ones look like they might be… quicker?

Goes through first axe:

- Maybe not.
- Hoo shit!

Goes through second axe:

- I'm actually physically uncomfortable being up here! ***communicates psychological state defining himself only as the player*** Now those two…
- I think I'm gonna have to…

Goes through remaining two axes:

- Ya.

Enters room at the end of bridge and moves slightly to the left; there are statues and a chest at the end of the room; almost immediately steps on a trap, but his position allows him to avoid the three arrows shot from an opening behind the chest and aimed at the archway:

- Wow! Shit!
- Ohohoh Jesus!

Goes to chest and opens it:

- Oh man!

{Large Titanite Shard x2}

- Large tita- There we go!

Opens inventory menu:

- See that's what I need!

Reads information on shards:

- Now that I have a couple of them I can upgrade my falchion even more, if I want. I probably should.

Goes through other exit of room, leaving the area…

Masterkizz, Dark Souls LP, Part 30, Sen's Fortress

12:10 – 18:15 (segment length = six minutes and five seconds)

Stanza 1

    1 MK: Oh, what… like…
    2 MK: Swinging blades?
    3 MK: Prince of Persia…

Stanza 2

    4 MK: O:h, if we get knocked off…
    5 MK: Oh what is that a titanite demon down there?
    6 MK: It is!
    7 MK: So it looks like if we get knocked off
    8 MK: we'd probably fall down there I imagine.

Stanza 3

    9 MK: Oh, again this is all new… for me, so…
    10 MK: I've never been here,
    11 MK: so I don't know what to expect.
    12 MK: I don't know if something's gonna jump at…

Stanza 4

    13 MK: I think we just…
    14 MK: hope we get the timing
    15 MK: and we just run through.
    16 MK: That was not too bad.
    17 MK: Here we go.

Stanza 5

    18 MK: O:h, what the… [laughs]
    19 MK: For real?
    20 MK: O:h, now this… [laughs]
    21 MK: lightning death?
    22 MK: Oh man!

Stanza 6

    23 MK: I tried to parry! [laughs]
    24 MK: Oh he's gonna knock us off.
    25 MK: O:h! We just walk off?!

   SCENE +>

Stanza 7

26 MK: [laughs] Oh man, we survived!
27 MK: Oh, estus! [laughs]

Stanza 8

28 MK: Thought I could backstab him for a second there…
29 MK: A:h still electricity!

Stanza 9

30 MK: It must be the dude down here, is it?
31 MK: O:h what, there's another one there!

Stanza 10

32 MK: I'm gonna need the… uh… oh that bloody ring!
33 MK: I have to kill this guy first.
34 MK: Oh, you walk so slow here.

Stanza 11

35 MK: Got to… chop him again!
36 MK: There ya go!

SCENE+>

Stanza 12

37 MK: OK this dude looks like he's after me man!
38 MK: Oh is this dude [unintelligible]
39 MK: Oh if he sees me
40 MK: he's gonna come after me too.

Stanza 13

41 MK: Da:mn!
42 MK: Estus you gonna have to…

Stanza 14

43 MK: O:h this is bad!
44 MK: He can probably get through there…

Stanza 15

45 MK: How quick can we go?
46 MK: Do… do… d-d-d-d-do!

Stanza 16

47 MK: Ah something's attacking me!

Stanza 17

48 MK: Rusted iron…
49 MK: We gotta…

Stanza 18

50 MK: A:h! I get death attacks!
51 MK: Alright that one's [unintelligible]

Stanza 19

52 MK: What is that up there man!
53 MK: Is it a caster?
54 MK: Or is this place just filled with these bloody things?

Stanza 20

55 MK: O:h, that almost got through
56 MK: and got me!

SCENE+>

Stanza 21

57 MK: Alright at least we can sneak and move now
58 MK: with the rusted…

Stanza 22

59 MK: Oh, no! Where are we…
60 MK: O:h!

Stanza 23

61 MK: Let me guess
62 MK: there gonna be another one
63 MK: behind this corner like…
64 MK: Ehh! [laughs]
65 MK: Agh! I told ya! [laughs]
66 MK: Damn!
67 MK: Now he's gonna be after me!

Stanza 24

68 MK: O:h ridiculous damage!
69 MK: [grunts] Estus!

SCENE +>

Stanza 25

> 70 MK: I'm just gonna have to fight him!
> 71 MK: Ah I wonder if I can get…
> 72 MK: can I get some magic?
> 73 MK: [sings] "Get real magic! Yaya!"

Stanza 26

> 74 MK: Now attack.
> 75 MK: Attack.

Stanza 27

> 76 MK: Oh k, get killed. Get k-
> 77 MK: good idea!

Stanza 28

> 78 MK: I can't strike through that…
> 79 MK: and the guy up here… [laughs]

Stanza 29

> 80 MK: I'm thinking I wasn't supposed to get knocked here, no.
> 81 MK: That's what I'm thinking.

Stanza 30

> 82 MK: Ugh.
> 83 MK: This guy just…
> 84 MK: I just can't do the damage.
> 85 MK: I'm hurting him,
> 86 MK: but it didn't do much…
> 87 MK: Ah, I should have…

Stanza 31

> 88 MK: Will he get through here?
> 89 MK: Does he get stuck there?
> 90 MK: Oh if he's stuck there
> 91 MK: you're eating arrows for years, mate!
> 92 MK: Ye:s, you are! [laughs]

Stanza 32

> 93 MK: Here we go!
> 94 MK: O:h, it barely does anything at all.

95 MK: I think it's the only way we gonna be able to get out of here alive though.

Stanza 33

96 MK: Look at him!
97 MK: Super boring play!

Stanza 34

98 MK: Oops, oops! [laughs]
99 MK: Oops! Oops! [laughs]

Stanza 35

100 MK: Oh I don't think he liked…
101 MK: I don't think he liked eating the arrows.

Stanza 36

102 MK: I don't know what their weakness is.
103 MK: Is the problem.

Stanza 37

104 MK: I just get a chop in and get back…
105 MK: No?

Stanza 38

106 MK: Ohh and these…
107 MK: What is that up there?! [laughs]

Stanza 39

108 MK: A:h… [laughs] Stop it!
109 MK: [laughs] Stop it!

Stanza 40

110 MK: Ah! Arghhh! Ugh! [laughs]
111 MK: I'm running out of estus!
112 MK: [laughs] Oh man!

Stanza 41

113 MK: This is not fair! [laughs]

Stanza 42

114 MK: Oh we blocked that one.
115 MK: Oh it staggered us.

Stanza 43

    116 MK: One… Ah it just… Ugh…

Stanza 44

    117 MK: A:h that's got such a range on it!

Stanza 45

    118 MK: O:h man!

Stanza 46

    119 MK: Alright see… I'm…
    120 MK: I don't know…
    121 MK: I don't think it's worth burning humanity
    123 MK: trying to get out of here alive to be honest.

Stanza 47

    123 MK: I'm fairly close to the bonfire,
    126 MK: I know what to expect now
    127 MK: when I come through, so…

Stanza 48

    126 MK: I'll see if I can just chip this guy…
    127 MK: I hope we can get him
    128 MK: before he acts up
    129 MK: with his lightning again.

Stanza 49

    130 MK: There we go.

Stanza 50

    131 MK: What the hell?
    132 MK: A:h he's trying to…
    133 MK: you can try and drink empty estus?
    134 MK: O:h! [laughs] There's nothing left mate!

Stanza 51

    135 MK: A:h this guy is definitely protecting something over here.

Stanza 52

    136 DS: Demon Titanite
    137 MK: Demon titanite.

SCENE +>

Stanza 53

    138 MK: Alright.
    139 MK: Now what are these things?
    140 MK: O:h! We:ll they're like… cra:zy looking dudes!

Stanza 54

    141 MK: Wanna [see] how much damage they take from the bow.

Stanza 55

    142 MK: A:h I hate it,
    143 MK: cause they know exactly where I am.

Stanza 56

    144 MK: O:h they don't take much either!
    145 MK: Hell, damn, crap! [laughs]
    146 MK: O:h but they do stacks of damage!

Stanza 57

    147 MK: Alright the bow is not a viable option there.

SCENE +>

Stanza 58

    148 MK: Let's run this way!

Stanza 59

    149 MK: Ah is that a [unintelligible] point up here?

Stanza 60

    150 MK: What's this?
    151 MK: Oh, oh, oh a ladder!
    152 MK: Ladders are good! [laughs]
    153 MK: [unintelligible] like a good ladder!

Stanza 61

    154 MK: Ah man, sick, sick,
    155 MK: [unintelligible], [unintelligible]…

Stanza 62

    156 MK: Is it worth me running back to the bonfire?

157 MK: Because I think I can probably get there safely providing…
158 MK: where is this gonna lead me?
159 MK: Is this gonna lead me back up…
160 MK: behind the swinging blades
161 MK: or in front of the swinging blades?

Stanza 63

163 MK: Ah man!

Stanza 64

163 MK: Oh he's got some stuff what?
164 DS: Large Soul of a Proud Knight
165 MK: Large soul.
166 MK: Proud knight.
167 MK: Thank you!

Stanza 65

168 MK: Illusory?
169 MK: Yeah! [laughs]
170 MK: We got all the illusories! [laughs]

APPENDIX IV: List of tables and figures