

Abstract

Applying online ethnography, this thesis explores the online game, *World of Warcraft (WoW)*, and the WoW player community in mainland China. It focuses on how players relate and interact with others, how they develop friendships and define themselves as “WoWers” rather than “game addicts”. This thesis tries to argue that in a broader social context, players are representative of everyone in the Internet space. The collective identity they construct and tactical maneuvers they apply can work as weapons to resist the governmental control over Internet freedom. In this sense, this thesis has positive values in helping creating an Internet space with more freedom.

Keywords: online games, identity construction, player community, collective identity, resistance