

# Posudek diplomové práce

Matematicko-fyzikální fakulta Univerzity Karlovy

**Thesis author** Alexandra Petrova

**Thesis title** Representation of Gay and Bisexual Women in Video Games and Players' Attitudes: An Empirical Study

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**Program** Computer Science **Specialization** Computer Graphics and Games Development

**Review author** Mgr. Klára Pešková, Ph.D. **Role** reviewer

**Position** Department of Software and Computer Science Education

## Review text:

The thesis deals with players' attitude toward gay characters in computer games and the influence of the presence of such characters on players' gaming experience. The author of the thesis proposed several hypotheses and conducted an experiment with Faculty of Arts students to see whether placing a lesbian character in a game instead of the straight woman changes players engagement in the game and also his or her attitude to lesbians. In her research, the author employs techniques proven to be effective for the topic, such as the Modern Homonegativity Scale.

The main result of the study is that inclusion of a lesbian character in an action video game has a negative effect on players' game engagement, regardless of their attitudes towards lesbians. This result is consistent with other similar studies. Other interesting — but not suprising — result is that randomly placing a gay character into a game is not enough to change players' perspective.

I have several minor comments to the thesis:

- some terms are not explained (e.g., 'AAA games')
- the description of the results tables lack the explanation of the displayed measures
- I would appreciate a better visualization of the results, instead of just tables
- some of the hypothesis are a little naïve, in my opinion. For example expecting that a life-long build attitude could change by playing a game for 30 minutes, as in hypothesis 3 (“There will be positive change in explicit attitudes in the experimental group compared to the control group.”), is unrealistic.

I have some issues with the game itself; however I understand that the game is not a part of the thesis:

- the game was a little bit chaotic and maybe too action, which at least in my case draw the attention from the lesbian/straight romance storyline
- going through the initial dialogs + training again after dying was a little annoying
- once I managed to get away from the room floor and I could not return back
- I did not find a way to exit the game
- when I re-run the game, I had to go through the first set of tests again

I suppose this lack of user-friendliness could also be the reason why so many people were unable to finish the experiment.

**I recommend the thesis for defense.**

**I suggest to not consider the thesis for the annual award.**

On February 5th 2024

Signature: