

Katherine Hulbert

COME 352 A

Dr. Kretz

2/24/20

Physical, Emotional, and Mental Effects of APEX Legends Gameplay

I observed an individual playing APEX Legends on the Xbox One. At the beginning of the hour, he started off explaining a lot of what was going on in the game to me, unprompted. He had a very calm demeanor as he started off and had a relaxed posture, leaning back in his chair with his feet up on an ottoman. He talked to his game quite a bit- for example, expressing verbal excitement when he found loot, or cursing when someone had an “unfair kill”. He would muse to himself what he was doing and would talk to his online competitors and teammates as if they could hear him- which they couldn’t, since he did not have a microphone.

As time went on, I could see him getting more and more absorbed in the game. He leaned forward more, his eyes became glued to the screen and he would not look away even when someone else came into the room and addressed him, he did not acknowledge them. His fingers were very restless on his controller, when he was on a loading screen he would continuously flip the joystick back and forth. He would get visibly upset when one of his teammates did something he did not approve of and would scoff and throw his hands up, and would bite his nails while he was on “observing mode” after he had died in the game. At the end of the hour, it was clear that he was much less relaxed than when he started off.

Knowing the individual helped me to see that this behavior was not extremely out of the ordinary, as he is very competitive and critical of his/others' performances. He also does tend to wonder out loud quite regularly, so I was not surprised to witness that while observing him. However, it did seem a bit amplified while he was playing this game, and I saw many more physical effects than usual.

When I interviewed the subject after the hour was up, he admitted to being affected negatively when he would have a "bad game day" and would usually get fed up and angry, and would turn off the game to avoid putting himself in a worse mood and would do something else. However, he said that when he would have a day that involved a winning streak, he would continue with it and it would boost his confidence. He also acknowledged that he is quite vocal when it came to his comments during gameplay, and said that talking out loud helped him to focus and keep him on track.

Overall, it was evident that playing APEX Legends had physical, emotional, and mental effects on the subject, and that it built up more and more as he had more gameplay.