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NeoGAF
BELIEVE

Closed Thread

Jackben
bitch I'm taking calls.
(02-28-2013, 06:02 PM)

#101

There was no dev. Ken Levine was the one considering quitting before having an internal discussion and uniting the split personas of his own fragmented mind.

MoonsaultSlayer
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:02 PM)

#102

> Originally Posted by **waypoetic**
> Read my latest post..

But you realize the article is about the villain now, right?

shinobi602
Daddy Goggles Group™
Member in good standing
(02-28-2013, 06:02 PM)

#103

> Originally Posted by **waypoetic**
> Sorry, i wrote antagonist but i meant protagonist. Huh.

You play as Booker Dewitt, not religious (at least, it was never mentioned). Comstock (religious) is the leader of Columbia, he's who Levine is talking about.

DocSeuss
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:03 PM)

#104

> Originally Posted by **shinobi602**
> Good post, and I agree from my personal experience as well.

The best religious people I know are people who use their religion as a code to live by--as a guidebook for how to be good to other people. Nobody ever portrays them, though. :|

Last edited by DocSeuss; 02-28-2013 at 06:33 PM.

Kusagari
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:03 PM)

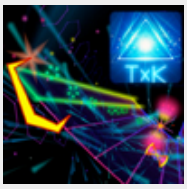
#105

> Originally Posted by **waypoetic**
> Read my latest post..

Your last post still makes you sound like you have no idea what's going on.

Skyzard
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:03 PM)

#106



Atheism sells today I think. Who knows if there was a dev. Smart but pesky.

waypoetic
Banned
(02-28-2013, 06:04 PM)

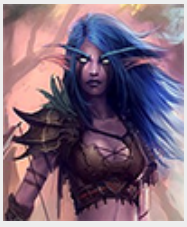
#107

> Originally Posted by **Figboy79**
> **I agree with you 100%. I am a religious person, but I'm also a huge believer in science, and don't feel that a belief in one co tradicts the other**

Does not compute. And are you saying that science is a freakin *belief*?

Coolwhip
Banned
(02-28-2013, 06:04 PM)

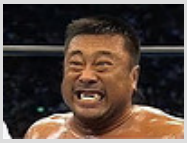
#108



Religion discussion on the internet is always risky. So I'll press the back button

badgenome
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:04 PM)

#109



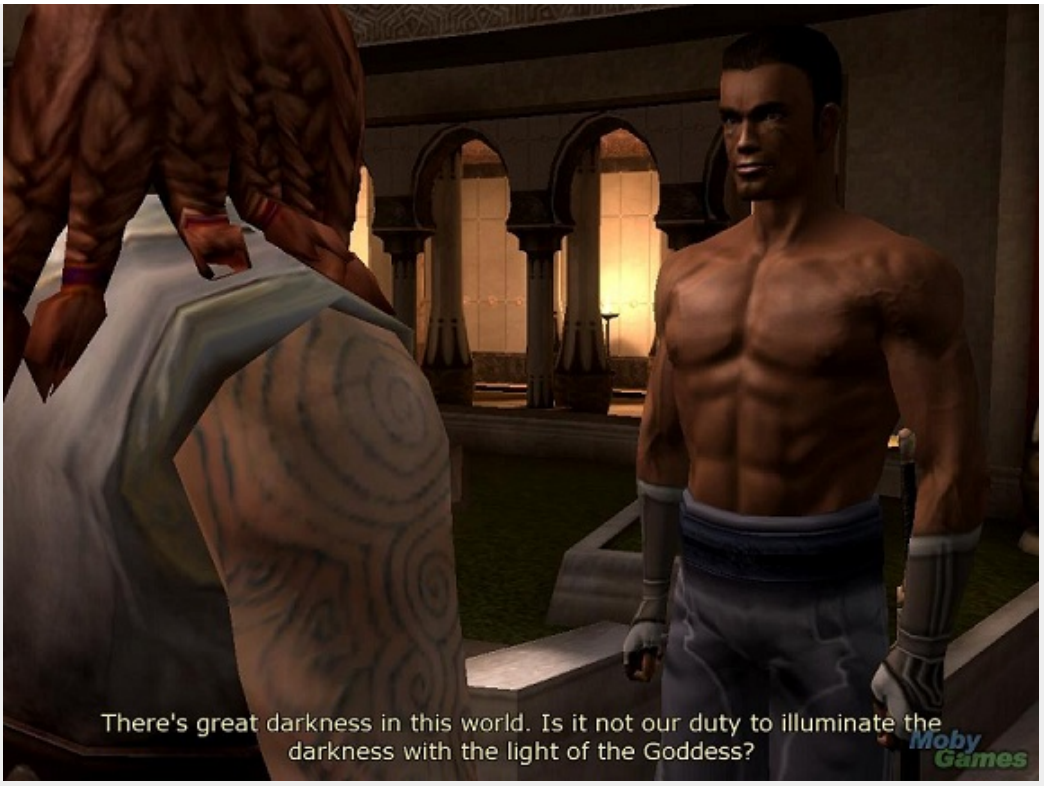
"Stay and finish making my game, would you kindly?"

Messofanego
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:04 PM)

#110

> Originally Posted by **DocSeuss**
> I don't think I've ever seen a well-written religious character in games.

Kian (Dreamfall)



Dance Inferno
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:04 PM)

#111

> Originally Posted by **waypoetic**
> Does not compute. And are you saying that science is a freakin *belief*?

You're trying too hard. You know what he means.

Black Door
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:05 PM)

#112

Bullshit. That guy would have been briefed multiple times about how the character acted and would have bounced ages ago if he really was offended. Especially if the character in question is the fucking lead villain

Dynamite Ringo Matsuri
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:05 PM)

#113

> Originally Posted by **Jackben**
> There was no dev. Ken Levine was the one considering quitting before having an internal discussion and uniting the split personas of his own fragmented mind.

This is why Rin is best girl

CornBurrito
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:05 PM)

#114

> Originally Posted by **waypoetic**
> The antagonist in the game is religious?

> Welp. I'm out.

I guess I'll be buying two copies then.

Dude Abides
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:06 PM)

#115

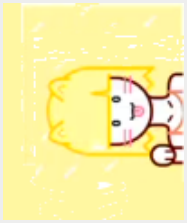
Since people seem utterly oblivious to reference, I'll post again:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anthony_Comstock

"Comstockery is the world's standing joke at the expense of the United States. Europe likes to hear of such things. It confirms the deep-seated conviction of the Old World that America is a provincial place, a second-rate country-town civilization after all." - G.B. Shaw.

Cartman86
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:06 PM)

#116



No matter what you do there is always going to be people who dislike what you are trying to say. We probably will never know what specifically causes this individual to take offense, but I generally trust Levine in doing what was best for the project, and not change his vision simply because someone didn't like it.

I mean look at Bioshock 1. That villain is an atheist who's philosophy incorporates atheism a fair amount. Arguably though the more important philosophy Ryan holds to is individualism. The game is all about taking that idea to the extreme. Levine has talked about how he isn't religious and agrees with some of Ayn Rands views. I don't see Levine criticizing a philosophy he can sympathize with on a variety of levels (Objectivsm), but not with one he's farther from (religious nationalism). I trust him.

I do find this fascinating because i've always wondered if this happens more often in video games and other media. There are a ton of people who work on films and games who have no say in those creative aspects of it. I mean Assassin's Creed outright says religion is bullshit, and yet over 200 people have worked on that game. I know I would have a tough time working on a project that was antithetical to my worldview. Obviously there are lines you draw. If it was a game about the power of faith or some abstract shit I could probably handle it as long as it fell in line with my morals (charity, selflessness etc.), but if you told me I was making a game about the power of faith healing I would probably quit.

Last edited by Cartman86; 02-28-2013 at 06:10 PM.

Fancy Corndog
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:06 PM)

#117

> Originally Posted by **CornBurrito**
> I guess I'll be buying two copies then.

He thought antagonist meant protagonist.

He's ok now. Which I hope he realizes is the other side of the exact same coin.

---

shinobi602
Daddy Goggles Group™
Member in good standing
(02-28-2013, 06:07 PM)

#118

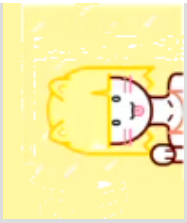
> Originally Posted by **Black Door**
> Bullshit. That guy would have been briefed multiple times about how the character acted and would have bounced ages ago if he really was offended. Especially if the character in question is the fucking lead villain

The dev was apparently offended at a scene at the end of the game. Not every dev on the team will play the whole game through, and if they do, it could be a while before they do, like now.

Cartman86
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:07 PM)

#119

> Originally Posted by **Black Door**
> Bullshit. That guy would have been briefed multiple times about how the character acted and would have bounced ages ago if he really was offended. Especially if the character in question



> is the fucking lead villain

From what i've read the story is an ongoing process. This character changed a couple times even.

Massa
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:08 PM)

#120

Edited out to not be misinterpreted.

En Ex
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:08 PM)

#121

> Originally Posted by **Messofanego**
> Kian (Dreamfall)

His character arc in Dreamfall is another reason I'm pumped for Chapters.

[redacted]

---

omgkitty
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:08 PM)

#122

Dude sounds like a prude.

ShockingAlberto
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:08 PM)

#123

I'm not going to say I don't believe this story, but...actually I can't think of a good other way to say that.

---

rvy
Banned
(02-28-2013, 06:09 PM)

#124

Ken is awesome, can't wait.

Sophia
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:10 PM)

#125

> Originally Posted by **ShockingAlberto**
> I'm not going to say I don't believe this story, but...actually I can't think of a good other way to say that.

Does reek of an attempt to drum up attention, doesn't it? Ah well.

J-Rod
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:10 PM)

#126

Levine is a very good salesman.

Paches
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:10 PM)

#127

If it isn't a lie, it is stretching the truth at bare minimum. Don't buy it at all.

DocSeuss
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:11 PM)

#128

> Originally Posted by **Figboy79**
>
> I agree with you 100%. I am a religious person, but I'm also a huge believer in science, and don't feel that a belief in one co tradicts the other, or are mutually exclusive. Science has always been one of my favorite areas of study, and I'm constantly amazed at whatever the latest breakthroughs are. I really get annoyed at the way religious characters are portrayed in the entertainment mediums. They are generally written by non-religious writers, and reek of inexperience and, honestly, ignorance. I feel the same way about how 99% of minority characters are written in fiction. As a black guy, it grates to constantly see that same portrayal of minorities,and really distracts me. Takers are written with the same level of generalizstion and ignorance.
>
> If Levine is being honest with this story, then it's great that he at least attempted to understand the perspective of his employee and his character. I'm really looking forward to Infinite either way.

Most writers--and this is a human problem in general--tend to write the most obvious things. If someone's non-religious, and the discussion doesn't come up, then sometimes, the only exposure they have are to the extremists (and they forget that the average--normal--person in America is religious to some extent, and isn't an insane, racist, homophobic, what have you psychopath), so that's what they write.

It's important for good writers to recognize all characters as fundamentally human. Even hyperbolic characters (which are EXTREMELY HARD TO WRITE) must, at their core, be fundamentally human. The point is to exaggerate their human traits, not just portray the obvious parts.

> Originally Posted by **guek**
>
> This is precisely why all this concerns me. I seriously doubt the writing abilities of just about anyone and everyone in the gaming industry, particularly when it comes to mature and complex themes.

Levine is one of the few people I'd trust to at least attempt it, but after Bioshock, I can't tell whether he's a bad writer or his characters were deliberately hyperbolic (to more obviously contrast two views).

> Originally Posted by **waypoetic**
> Does not compute. And are you saying that science is a freakin *belief*?

It is. People can choose to believe science or not, regardless of science's veracity (at this stage, gonna play the devil's advocate and point out that science has been wrong about things in the past :D).

Some people have the idea that religion and science are mutually exclusive ideas. Some people do not. I believe Figboy79 is in the latter group.

> Originally Posted by **Messofanego**
> Kian (Dreamfall)

I've not played Dreamfall.

> Originally Posted by **Dude Abides**
> Since people seem utterly oblivious to reference, I'll post again:
>
> http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anthony_Comstock
>
> "Comstockery is the world's standing joke at the expense of the United States. Europe likes to hear of such things. It confirms the deep-seated conviction of the Old World that America is a provincial place, a second-rate country-town civilization after all." - G.B. Shaw.

Based on my interactions, many in Europe still like to hear such things (it's an idea which has never really died, and demonstrates how the class system still has influence in Europe more than it ever will in the US), which is why Europeans tend to take such a shine to the more left-leaning Americans (who tend, among other things, to talk about how backwards America is, how stupid the right wing is, and how we should emulate Europe more). It's one of the reasons that I, while sympathizing with many points of the American left, find it something of a challenge to actually join them.

As a writer, I think this observation actively helped me write better characters.

Last edited by DocSeuss; 02-28-2013 at 06:17 PM.

Jackben
bitch I'm taking calls.
(02-28-2013, 06:12 PM)

#129

> Originally Posted by **Dynamite Ringo Matsuri**
> This is why Rin is best girl

And Ringo with the obscure throwback out of nowhere! [redacted].

partyphone
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:12 PM)

#130

> Originally Posted by **Cartman86**
> I mean look at Bioshock 1. That villain is an atheist who's philosophy incorporates atheism a fair amount. Arguably the more important element of that philosophy is individualism and the game is taking that idea to the extreme. I don't see Levine criticizing a philosophy he can sympathize with on a variety of levels (Objectivsm), but not with one he's farther from (religious nationalism).

Except Bioshock 1 was literally and figuratively a criticism of objectivism. I don't know if you noticed but things didn't exactly turn out well for Rapture. And the water crushing the city was an overt metaphor for reality crushing idealism.

The Faceless Master
#upliftingtherace
(02-28-2013, 06:12 PM)

#131

Molyneux has several apprentices it seems...

CornBurrito
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:12 PM)

#132

> Originally Posted by **DocSeuss**
> It is. People can choose to believe science or not, regardless of science's veracity (at this stage, gonna play the devil's advocate and point out that science has been wrong about things in the past :D).

You do realize the point of the scientific method is so that current positions can be overturned as new evidence presents itself? Right?

Vinci
Danish
(02-28-2013, 06:12 PM)

#133

> Originally Posted by **DocSeuss**
> The best religious people I know who use their religion as a code to live by--as a guidebook for how to be good to other people. Nobody ever portrays them, though. :|

Nope.

One thing I would advise anyone wanting to write do is... Research. If everything you know of a specific type of person is from movies or TV shows, get the hell outside and go meet one. It's not hard to find a Christian or a physicist or any other sort of person. If possible, meet many. And where you can't, start with giving people the benefit of the doubt - don't assume that one aspect of who they are would so overwhelm everything else that you turn them into a caricature.

MuddyDonut
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:12 PM)

#134

> Originally Posted by **Dynamite Ringo Matsuri**
> This is why Rin is best girl

But Lilly gave me more feels

injurai
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:13 PM)

#135

I really respect Levine for this.

I see a lot of people in that give no second thought of the implications that religious beliefs have on developing a character. I know a lot of people what to be in some politically correct mindset with these sorts of things but that just doesn't happen. You really have to explore things from a vast array of angles to get to any conclusion.

The only other game that I felt maturely dealt with living religions In a respectful way was Assassin's Creed. Granted it made each organization out to be disillusioned, but it did so In a way that called out man's own evil. Not attacking the religion itself. It did show how religion was used as a fuel to drives man's own wickedness.

Last edited by injurai; 02-28-2013 at 06:17 PM.

Corto
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:13 PM)

#136

> Originally Posted by **Lunchbox**
> PR stunt

Nah. He got a raise. [redacted]

GravityMan
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:13 PM)

#137

This story is a bit hard to believe, so I'm in the camp that thinks this is an unnecessary PR stunt.

---

piratepwnsninja
Volition Dev
(02-28-2013, 06:14 PM)

#138

> Originally Posted by **ShockingAlberto**
> I'm not going to say I don't believe this story, but...actually I can't think of a good other way to say that.

It's real. I have no attachment to Irrational, but I know for a fact this is true.

> Originally Posted by **waypoetic**
> Sorry, i wrote antagonist but i meant protagonist. Huh.

You do realize that the protagonist isn't the religious zealot, right?

---

electricpirate
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:14 PM)

#139

He's alluded multiple times to having a religious person in the office shaping his views on comstock, I didn't realize that it came to a dude almost quitting.

Game sounds, great, I'm pumped.

Sophia
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:17 PM)

#140

> Originally Posted by **piratepwnsninja**
> It's real. I have no attachment to Irrational, but I know for a fact this is true.

I don't doubt that it's real. Just that it's probably not nearly as dramatic as Levine makes it out to be.

---

ironcreed
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:18 PM)

#141

> Originally Posted by **electricpirate**
> He's alluded multiple times to having a religious person in the office shaping his views on comstock, I didn't realize that it came to a dude almost quitting.

LOL, if true, imagine how the guy felt being the muse for writing the villain.

shinobi602
Daddy Goggles Group™
Member in good standing
(02-28-2013, 06:18 PM)

#142

> Originally Posted by **Sophia**
> I don't doubt that it's real. Just that it's probably not nearly as dramatic as Levine makes it out to be.

What's so dramatic? He explained in very level headed terms...

ShockingAlberto
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:19 PM)

#143

> Originally Posted by **piratepwnsninja**
> It's real. I have no attachment to Irrational, but I know for a fact this is true.

Let me rephrase.

I do not think the story is completely accurate as Levine tells it.

Andrew.
Banned
(02-28-2013, 06:19 PM)

#144

> Originally Posted by **piratepwnsninja**
> It's real. **I have no attachment to Irrational**, but **I know for a fact this is true**.

No attachment huh? Please. Tell us more.

Dali
This man has no penis thanks to The Galactic Bishounen
(02-28-2013, 06:20 PM)

#145

> Originally Posted by **DocSeuss**
> This certainly increases my respect for the man. **Too many people just seem to run ahead with absurd, offensive caricatures of religious characters** (hi Infamous 2 and Resistance 3!), where they're portrayed as bizarrely superstitious (and not in a positive way, like, say, Native Americans) and incapable of any critical thought.
>
> This kind of caricature tends to come from people who aren't religious themselves. It's a rookie writing mistake. The train of thought is something like "oh, well, religion's obviously fake, so these people can't be logical at all." Problem is, humans are... significantly more complex than that. I live in a very science-driven community, but we also have a high degree of religious individuals here--and yes, there's a significant overlap. Lots of people here who are both religious and scientists. They're very logical, very rational, completely normal humans, not weirdos who think Satan's hiding behind every corner trying to get at them by way of black gay muslim atheists or something, but that's precisely the kind of caricature I see all too often.
>
> As a writer/writer wannabe, I've spent a lot of time studying people, just watching them, how they react to things, why they do what they do, and so on and so forth... and the way religious characters are portrayed is almost *exclusively* the sort of non-existent (unless, maybe, you count Fred Phelps' church or some of the more cult-like Christian offshoots) evangelical types.

> I don't think I've ever seen a well-written religious character in games.
>
> Still, even if Levine revised his script, I find myself worrying. Comstock, after all, is a religious bad guy. If he's anything like the characters seen in Bioshock, he'll be, effectively, a hyperbolic literary device. Will he be balanced out with more reasonable characters? If you're having a hard time understanding the concerns I've got here, think of it like this: a writer establishes a 'ghetto' character who exists as an antagnost in the game. His portrayal is hyperbolic, but exists to point out the flaws in ghetto culture (and there are many). At worst, the writer runs the risk of coming across as saying "lol, black people suck," which, of course, isn't true.

This is America. You may see an offensive religious caricature. I see *real* life. :(

vocab
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:20 PM)

#146

LOL. This is why we can't have nice things in our video games. Whatever. That's what this game needs, more bad PR.

Last edited by vocab; 02-28-2013 at 06:23 PM.

Zia
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:20 PM)

#147

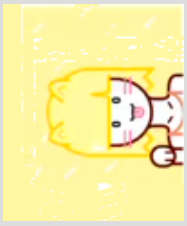
Hopefully a nuanced, but not sympathetic, character. It's too easy to play softball with religion, unfortunately.

GoddyofAus
Banned
(02-28-2013, 06:21 PM)

#148

The funniest thing about all this is that Levine sees people calling him a liar and just doesn't give a shit. That is detailed very well in his interview with Adam Sessler on Rev3. He makes it clear that the game will speak for itself.

Cartman86
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:21 PM)



#149

> Originally Posted by **partyphone**
> Except Bioshock 1 was literally and figuratively a criticism of objectivism. I don't know if you noticed but things didn't exactly turn out well for Rapture. And the water crushing the city was an overt metaphor for reality crushing idealism.

Yes exactly. In reading interviews with Levine post Bioshock he has talked about how he agreed with some of the points of objectivism, but wanted to present a critique of it in the game. The way he chose to do it was to push the scenario to the extreme (science sans values, ultra free market etc.) to show how hard those ideals can be to maintain in the real world. I fucking hate Ayn Rand so i'm not defending objectivism, but i'm just saying I think with Infinite he wants to do the same thing, but from a different extreme. In many interviews about Infinite he has spoken about how he needed to find an mental in with Comstock. He wasn't religious and has never had that experience so he couldn't see why people would have that impulse to follow. Compared to Ryan where he could see some of the reasons why Ryan's philosophy was so attractive. Talking with this guy who wanted to quit (and maybe others according to some interviews in the past) gave him ideas as to why someone would follow this guy. So yeah this will probably be a take down of sorts of religious nationalism, but it will contain if not a sympathetic character than understandable one.

Last edited by Cartman86; 02-28-2013 at 06:25 PM.

Oldschoolgamer
The physical form of blasphemy
(02-28-2013, 06:21 PM)

#150

Granted, although he's been on a recent kick pointing out the edgier facts about the game, I'm truly struggling to find what's so hard to believe about this...

Jackben
bitch I'm taking calls.
(02-28-2013, 06:21 PM)

#151

> Originally Posted by **ironcreed**
> LOL, if true, imagine how the guy felt being the muse for writing the villain.

That would be a dick move if they did it without his knowledge. If this story is true I'm glad it sounds like they found parity.

Corto
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:23 PM)

#152

To the people that are saying that this is just a PR stunt. You do realize that Levine disclosing this internal anecdote has put even more pressure over Infinite story and his writing? Now people will scrutinize even further the quality of the writing, how these themes are treated in the game, people will nitpick the smallest detail and discrepancy to try to turn this tale against Levine and the game. Risky PR stunt if it were one. I believe it. Levine is smarter than this.

GoddyofAus
Banned
(02-28-2013, 06:24 PM)

#153

> Originally Posted by **Corto**
>
> To the people that are saying that this is just a PR stunt. **You do realize that Levine disclosing this internal anecdote has put even more pressure over Infinite story and his writing? Now people will scrutinize even further the quality of the writing, how these themes are treated in the game, people will nitpick the smallest detail and discrepancy to try to turn this tale against Levine and the game.** Risky PR stunt if it were one. I believe it. Levine is smarter than this.

That's exactly what he wants.

Messofanego
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:24 PM)

#154

> Originally Posted by **DocSeuss**
>
> I've not played Dreamfall.

Dreamfall was written in part by reaction to current events at the time (2006) about terrorism, the US invasion into Iraq, and views of religious fundamentalists. You get to understand where Kian's views are coming from, as they're passed from religious doctrine and he's just a missionary. When he meets the main character, they have proper arguments about how much control a religious state should have and why race persecution is not cool. Kian starts to empathise with the rebels and understands where they come from.

The islamic call to prayer is even heard at the start of the game as it's set in Casablanca, a future affluent version of Africa, and there is plenty of Middle Eastern imagery. I found it tasteful and understanding, which is odd because the game was written by Norwegians.

You should try it out! Sequel to one of the best adventure games. GoG, and Steam.

DocSeuss
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:24 PM)

#155

> Originally Posted by **CornBurrito**
>
> You do realize the point of the scientific method is so that current positions can be overturned as new evidence presents itself? Right?

As someone with many family members, friends, and acquaintances in the scientific community, I have no faith in the scientific method.

It doesn't *matter* anymore. It's for idealists. All that matters is grant money. That's why promising research gets shut down for less-promising research. I watched a guy get his lab taken from him because once, he got a robot and someone else didn't, and when she got promoted, she got back at him for outproposing her.

I've seen people steal research, hush it up (and this isn't, like, conspiracy level stuff, this is just mundane technological stuff the average person doesn't know or care about), ostracize scientists, and do all sorts of petty stuff all in the name of grant money.

The scientific method exists pretty much in name only for most in the scientific establishment.

That's the problem when science is controlled by government and government money. People in the private sector (hi, Elon Musk!) don't have this problem nearly as bad, but most science money is government porkbarreling/university stuff.

> Originally Posted by **Vinci**

> Nope.
>
> One thing I would advise anyone wanting to write do is... Research. If everything you know of a specific type of person is from movies or TV shows, get the hell outside and go meet one. It's not hard to find a Christian or a physicist or any other sort of person. If possible, meet many. And where you can't, start with giving people the benefit of the doubt - don't assume that one aspect of who they are would so overwhelm everything else that you turn them into a caricature.

Wow, I typoed that. Should have an "are people who." And, since I did qualify it with "people I know," I think it would be a challenge for you to tell me "nope," since your knowledge of my personal experience is limited.

Research is all well and good, but yeah, getting outside, and watching people, listening to them, seeing how they react to things is the best way to learn. All stories are character driven, when you get down to it. Even the event-driven stories had people that made many of those events happen.

People, warts and all, are absolutely awesome, and good writers understand that.

> Originally Posted by **Messofanego**
>
> **Dreamfall** was written in part by reaction to current events at the time (2006) about terrorism, the US invasion into Iraq, and views of religious fundamentalists. You get to understand where Kian's views are coming from, as they're passed from religious doctrine and he's just a missionary. When he meets the main character, they have proper arguments about how much control a religious state should have and why race persecution is not cool. Kian starts to empathise with the rebels and understands where they come from.
>
> The islamic call to prayer is even heard at the start of the game as it's set in Casablanca, a future affluent version of Africa, and there is plenty of Middle Eastern imagery. I found it tasteful and understanding, which is odd because the game was written by Norwegians.
>
> You should try it out! Sequel to one of the best adventure games. GoG, and Steam.

I'd like to play both of The Longest Journey games at some point, and they're on my list of games I want to play, but I've got a backlog and promised myself I wouldn't be spending any more money on video games this year, unless I could help it.

Also, as someone with many Norwegians in his family, your remark would seem to indicate you think it's surprising that Norwegians are tasteful or understanding people. I don't follow this line of reasoning.

> Originally Posted by **Dali**
>
> This is America. You may see an offensive religious caricature. I see *real* life. :(

I once had the opportunity to run over Fred Phelps with my car. Trust me, I've been close enough to these people to know what they're like, and I've yet to see someone who could even *begin* to write them properly. It's one of the reasons I've avoided it myself. I can never get them quite right. Instead, it's "oh lord, please protect us from that monster who is probably Satan," or "huh, I have super powers--GOD MUST HAVE GIVEN ME THESE TO KILL EVERYONE WHO HAS SUPERPOWERS!" Then you've got the people who follow them in droves, and it never makes sense (likewise, the whole Black Ops II plot with people following Menendez doesn't make any sense--writers also rarely seem to understand just why it is people follow leaders. They don't understand Anonymous, and they haven't got a snowball's chance in hell of understanding anyone like Jim Jones).

I see the fucking *gamut* of human experience, and I see bad writers doing little more than creating straw people so they can go "lol, religion? What the fuck is this shit?"

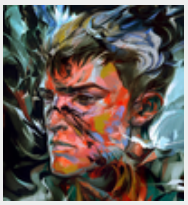
Last edited by DocSeuss; 02-28-2013 at 06:32 PM.

Remachinate
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:25 PM)

#156

> Originally Posted by **Cartman86**
>
> Yes exactly. In reading interviews with Levine post Bioshock he has talked about how he

agreed with some of the points of objectivism, but wanted to present a critique of it in the game.



Do you have a link of one such interview? I'd never heard Levine coming down on his views of Objectivism; he always dodged the question in interviews I read, framing BioShock as a Rorschach test for that issue. I'd be interested in hearing his personal take.

ironcreed
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:26 PM)

#157

> Originally Posted by **Jackben**
> That would be a dick move if they did it without his knowledge. If this story is true I'm glad it sounds like they found parity.

I am guessing that is probably why he nearly quit. I am not religious by any means, but I imagine it was more than weird for the guy.

DUFFMCWALIN
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:26 PM)

#158

> Originally Posted by **Dali**
> This is America. You may see an offensive religious caricature. I see *real* life. :(
>
> .

So one man makes everyone who is religious crazy?

GoddyofAus
Banned
(02-28-2013, 06:27 PM)

#159

> Originally Posted by **DUFFMCWALIN**
> So one man makes everyone who is religious crazy?

You don't pay much attention to conservative media in America, do you? Seen any Tea Party rallies lately?

Psi
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:28 PM)

#160

Villains are generally extremists of some kind, so I wouldn't really find it hard to believe that one is a religious nut. I highly doubt that the game will end up with anything truly offensive in it.

Side note: Don't let my avatar fool you, I'm not a huge fan of organized religion.

DUFFMCWALIN
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:29 PM)

#161

> Originally Posted by **GoddyofAus**
> You don't pay much attention to conservative media in America, do you? Seen any Tea Party rallies lately?

So thats all people then? All I'm saying is that there are rational religious people out there and you shouldn't group them all together on some crazy train.

Remachinate
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:29 PM)

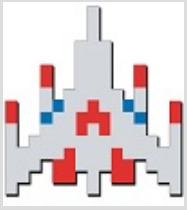
#162

> Originally Posted by **GoddyofAus**
> You don't pay much attention to conservative media in America, do you? Seen any Tea Party rallies lately?

Please don't equate all of Christianity with a splinter movement of the Conservative party.

watership
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:32 PM)

#163



> Originally Posted by **Currygan**
> someone tell Levine game will sell well, so he can stop spitting out ridiculous bollocks just to gain attention

Considering the hundreds of hours he's spent talking about this game, this was possible just a 2 min anecdote that just popped into his head. People want Bioshock infinite stories and any small random thing is going to trumpeted loudly. It's not always a push from the interviewee.

GoddyofAus
Banned
(02-28-2013, 06:32 PM)

#164

> Originally Posted by **DUFFMCWALIN**
> So thats all people then? All I'm saying is that there are rational religious people out there and you shouldn't group them all together on some crazy train.

> Originally Posted by **Remachinate**
> Please don't equate all of Christianity with a splinter movement of the Conservative party.

We aren't talking about all Christians, we're talking about American Christians, 26% of which are Evangelicals. That is no small number for what is essentially an extremist group, and the reason why I mentioned the Tea Party is because Columbia was practically built **for** them.

Jake Tower
Banned
(02-28-2013, 06:34 PM)

#165

> Originally Posted by **waypoetic**
> All i'm saying is that i can't relate to someone who's religious and if i'm supposed to bound with this character and "go on a journey" with him, i just, i can't and i'm not interested in doing so.

Firstly, the antagonist is the "bad guy," the player is the protagonist. This can, of course, be subverted through an unreliable narrator.

Secondly, your statement is profoundly ironic given your username. Religion is the poetry of man's soul.

ShockingAlberto
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:34 PM)

#166

> Originally Posted by **Corto**
> To the people that are saying that this is just a PR stunt. You do realize that Levine disclosing this internal anecdote has put even more pressure over Infinite story and his writing? Now people will scrutinize even further the quality of the writing, how these themes are treated in the game, people will nitpick the smallest detail and discrepancy to try to turn this tale against Levine and the game. Risky PR stunt if it were one. I believe it. Levine is smarter than this.

I don't think it is a designed PR stunt. I see it in the same way I see any given thing Randy Pitchford says - he is taking a story that may be true and making it sound like more than it was. Then he parlays that in to an endorsement of his own game's writing shortly before it comes out, a game plagued by a very publicly troubled development cycle, pushing a very "auteur hero" narrative.

It raises an eyebrow, if nothing else.

Though, who knows, maybe I am entirely wrong and it happened exactly as explained and he is not using the story as a marketing tool or for prideful boasts about his work. That'd be great. But my

instinct is telling me otherwise and I'm not trying to convince anyone else that they should agree with me.

sn00zer
SONYSTYLE
(02-28-2013, 06:34 PM)

#167

Actually really cool that the last antagonist was a fervent atheist and this antagonist is fervently religious.

GoddyofAus
Banned
(02-28-2013, 06:36 PM)

#168

> Originally Posted by **sn00zer**
> Actually really cool that the last antagonist was a fervent atheist and this antagonist is fervently religious.

That's the whole point, they're going from one extreme to the other to explore the themes of both worlds.

Vinci
Danish
(02-28-2013, 06:37 PM)

#169

> Originally Posted by **GoddyofAus**
> You don't pay much attention to conservative media in America, do you? Seen any Tea Party rallies lately?

The Tea Party is petering out pretty well nowadays. And even most Christians I know personally thought it was a joke to begin with.

Paches
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:37 PM)

#170

> Originally Posted by **The Faceless Master**
> Molyneux has several apprentices it seems...

Reminds me of this

He has learned well.

Remachinate
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:38 PM)

#171

> Originally Posted by **GoddyofAus**
> We aren't talking about all Christians, we're talking about American Christians, 26% of which are Evangelicals. That is no small number for what is essentially an extremist group, and the reason why I mentioned the Tea Party is because Columbia was practically built **for** them.

No, you mentioned the Tea Party to attempt to demonstrate that craziness is ubiquitous for American Christians. Limiting your scope to one country is still pretty inaccurate (and offensive) for those people in that category.

Messofanego
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:39 PM)

#172

> Originally Posted by **DocSeuss**
>
> Also, as someone with many Norwegians in his family, your remark would seem to indicate you think it's surprising that Norwegians are tasteful or understanding people. I don't follow this line of reasoning.

Not specifically Norwegians, just thought at the time they would be far removed far up in Scandinavia from any exposure to Islam or religion to be understanding about it.

It's only in the past few years with knowing my Muslim friends being from Norway, that Islam is pretty big there.

GoddyofAus
Banned
(02-28-2013, 06:41 PM)

#173

> Originally Posted by **Remachinate**
> No, you mentioned the Tea Party to attempt to demonstrate that craziness is ubiquitous for American Christians. Limiting your scope to one country is still pretty inaccurate (and offensive) for those people in that category.

Not when we're talking about Bioshock Infinite. Why would I talk about any other country when the game deals strictly with American themes?

udivision
Awarded the Segata Sanshiro Cross for posting beyond the call of duty.
(02-28-2013, 06:42 PM)

#174

> Originally Posted by **GoddyofAus**
> You don't pay much attention to conservative media in America, do you? Seen any Tea Party rallies lately?

Tea Party rallies were don't got nothing on Occupy. Poopin' on Carz!

kinggroin
Junior Member
(02-28-2013, 06:44 PM)

#175

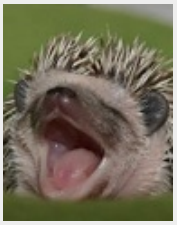
I'd wager most core gamers are atheist. I'd wager most developers are atheist. Most of both groups are probably Caucasian.

Religion and religious groups and minorities are usually pigeon holed, stereotyped, misrepresented, not represented, chastised, ridiculed or some combination of the above.

Furthermore, its just as prevalent in the industry, ours is so desperately trying to mimic.

Just observations from a Christian Latino gamer.

Muffdraul
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:44 PM)



#176

> Originally Posted by **DocSeuss**
> As someone with many family members, friends, and acquaintances in the scientific community, I have no faith in the scientific method.
>
> It doesn't *matter* anymore. It's for idealists. All that matters is grant money. That's why promising research gets shut down for less-promising research. I watched a guy get his lab taken from him because once, he got a robot and someone else didn't, and when she got promoted, she got back at him for outproposing her.
>
> I've seen people steal research, hush it up (and this isn't, like, conspiracy level stuff, this is just mundane technological stuff the average person doesn't know or care about), ostracize scientists, and do all sorts of petty stuff all in the name of grant money.
>
> The scientific method exists pretty much in name only for most in the scientific establishment.
>
> That's the problem when science is controlled by government and government money. People in the private sector (hi, Elon Musk!) don't have this problem nearly as bad, but most science money is government porkbarreling/university stuff.

That's a terrific indictment on money being a force of corruption and causing people to behave like assholes. But it has no bearing whatsoever on the inherent validity and worth of the scientific method. So much for logic and not letting your point of view become distorted by emotion.

DocSeuss

#177

Member
(02-28-2013, 06:44 PM)

> Originally Posted by **Messofanego**
>
> Not specifically Norwegians, just thought at the time they would be far removed far up in Scandinavia from any exposure to Islam or religion to be understanding about it.
>
> It's only in the past few years with knowing my Muslim friends being from Norway, that Islam is pretty big there.

Ah, that makes sense.

> Originally Posted by **GoddyofAus**
>
> You don't pay much attention to conservative media in America, do you? Seen any Tea Party rallies lately?

Funfax: I've been to a Tea Party rally, just to see what it was like.

They're often nice people. Tend to clean up after themselves. Really courteous and polite. Sometimes loud, and occasionally you'll get the fringe person who takes things to the extreme... but that happens everywhere.

Yeah, I've seen the same news reports everyone else has. They're not spinning an entirely fictitious narrative... but they doing what we might call unprofessional levels of exaggeration. The Tea Party is often portrayed as a boogey man, and as a moderate, I find the representations made by my liberal friends to be entirely reprehensible on the matter. This is a fairly long-standing problem, though. My father knew some people who were hired to protest some guy showing up at a university a while back. The students were all "meh?" and the people who were hired didn't care, but the local papers, who apparently hired the protestors, were basically trying to drum up news because they didn't approve of the school bringing the guy to town.

It's a pretty common tactic in more than just politics, of course. A union has recently come into town and started hiring people (not getting union members, but just random people) to hold up signs around town that say "SHAME ON [various companies]! LABOR DISPUTE!" It's weird--I'm mentioning a lot of behaviors that are somewhat off-topic, and I'm sorry for that. I just find all this stuff and how it all connects to be absolutely *fascinating*.

Would love to see someone write about this stuff with more maturity and intelligence than I ever could.

> Originally Posted by **Muffdraul**
>
> That's a terrific indictment on money being a force of corruption and causing people to behave like assholes. But it has no bearing whatsoever on the inherent validity and worth of the scientific method. So much for logic and not letting your point of view become distorted by emotion.

I misworded myself, and having received a PM about it and having seen your post, I'm going to try to edit that post to clarify.

Let's say that I think the scientific method is what everyone should follow, and that I think few, if any people actually do so anymore.

Last edited by DocSeuss; 02-28-2013 at 06:51 PM.

ironcreed
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:44 PM)

#178

If their goal was to garner more interest from fence sitters and those who kind of stopped paying attention, then it worked. My curiosity is piqued by wanting to see how such issues are handled. Which is what a game like this should be doing to you even before playing it... just like with the first one. I suddenly want to play this again, after losing interest over the troubled development.

GillianSeed79
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:46 PM)

#179

Serious question. If your original antagonist created such an extreme response such as to elicit a resignation letter from someone immediately after encountering him, isn't that a sign of a good antagonist? You don't want people, at least in some cases, to like your antagonist. I don't see why he should be afraid about offending religious people considering Comstock comes off as a racist, turn of the century tent revival-like preacher or a Jim Jones-like character. He's the bad guy. You should probably be offended by him.

If what Levine said is true, maybe the dev was just offended by a poorly written character? I mean, if your main antagonist is a religious-like leader, if you don't have any experience with those figures then I imagine the character probably rang hollow. Religious leaders and preachers can have a profound effect on people. If Comstock just came off as a maniac, maybe he just wasn't that well written to start with. Nobody who followed Jim Jones probably though they'd end up in a commune in Africa (Edit: South America. I'm an idiot) drinking poisoned Kool Aid when they first joined his church, but how did they end up there? There's a certain power religious zealots can have over people that's almost like a spell. I grew up in Bible country, so I've seen this first-hand.

Last edited by GillianSeed79; 02-28-2013 at 07:15 PM.

Jackben
bitch I'm taking calls.
(02-28-2013, 06:48 PM)

#180

> Originally Posted by **sn00zer**
> Actually really cool that the last antagonist was a fervent atheist and this antagonist is fervently religious.

I never thought about it that way. Very cool.

Remachinate
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:48 PM)

#181

> Originally Posted by **GoddyofAus**
> Not when we're talking about Bioshock Infinite. Why would I talk about any other country when the game deals strictly with American themes?

I didn't mention any other country. My point was that even if you just say only American Christians are all crazy, you're still wrong. I'm not saying that there aren't sizable groups with questionable beliefs, but it's ignorant to claim that there are no (or even few) Americans who hold religious beliefs without appearing to be insane.

GoddyofAus
Banned
(02-28-2013, 06:49 PM)

#182

> Originally Posted by **Remachinate**
> I didn't mention any other country. My point was that even if you just say only American Christians are all crazy, you're still wrong. I'm not saying that there aren't sizable groups with questionable beliefs, but it's ignorant to claim that there are no (or even few) Americans who hold religious beliefs without appearing to be insane.

When did I ever accuse anyone of being insane? Apart from referring to Evangelicals as extremist? If anything, a sizeable group of American Christians/religious people aren't stupid, they're just too easily manipulated by figureheads like Rush Limbaugh, Jerry Falwell up until his death and Karl Rove who I will quite gladly say are batshit insane.

> Originally Posted by **Remachinate**
> You implied as much above, offering the Tea Party as evidence to DUFFMCWALIN's question.

You can suggest I implied that all you want but you certainly misinterpreted it. You can't tell me that a Tea Party Rally wouldn't draw in a fair amount of religious zealots. Notice I said **fair amount**, not all. I am in no way suggesting all american christians are crazy, but I will refute anyone who tries and suggest that the crazy minority are completely irrelevant and uninfluential. Fox News is proof enough of that.

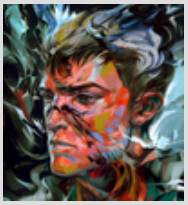
Last edited by GoddyofAus; 02-28-2013 at 06:58 PM.

Remachinate
Member

#183

> Originally Posted by **GoddyofAus**

(02-28-2013, 06:53 PM)



> When did I ever accuse anyone of being insane? Apart from referring to Evangelicals as extremist?

> Originally Posted by **DUFFMCWALIN**
>
> So one man makes everyone who is religious crazy?

> Originally Posted by **GoddyofAus**
>
> You don't pay much attention to conservative media in America, do you? Seen any Tea Party rallies lately?

You implied as much above, offering the Tea Party as evidence to DUFFMCWALIN's question.

EuropeOG
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:55 PM)

#184

Well I certainly won't be buying it to find out

---

heliosRAzi
the window was open, he lost his 'cock
(02-28-2013, 06:57 PM)

#185

> Originally Posted by **Remachinate**
>
> You implied as much above, offering the Tea Party as evidence to DUFFMCWALIN's question.

But the Tea Party is insane, but not just because of religious reasons

---

DocSeuss
Member
(02-28-2013, 06:57 PM)

#186

> Originally Posted by **GoddyofAus**
>
> When did I ever accuse anyone of being insane? Apart from referring to Evangelicals as extremist? If anything, a sizeable group of American Christians/religious people aren't stupid, they're just too easily manipulated by figureheads like Rush Limbaugh, Jerry Falwell up until his death and Karl Rove who I will quite gladly say are batshit insane.

I personally dislike Evangelicals, but I don't know any of them who have love for Falwell.

Rove was somebody nobody cared about until a documentary about how he helped Bush into the White House came out on PBS. Then he started showing up a lot more in the news and got vilified crazy amounts. He's a guy who's good at his job; only difference between him and other people like him is that he's a Republican. He's not special by any means.

(the above should indicate that I have little love for anyone in American politics)

Fried Food
Member
(02-28-2013, 07:00 PM)

#187

Can't wait for this game.

Zia
Member
(02-28-2013, 07:01 PM)

#188

I think, in an attempt to be more empathetic than thou with piles of anecdotal evidence that nobody really gives a shit about, people are conveniently forgetting that the extreme religious right has been the most destructive, and loudest, voice in American politics for the last few decades. I don't see this as being an indictment of the religious (Hey, I know decent religious people as well! Wow-neat!), but commentary on the perverse blend of capitalism, nationalism and religion that's stunted and plagued public policy and political discourse in recent times.

GoddyofAus
Banned
(02-28-2013, 07:02 PM)

#189

> Originally Posted by **Zia**
> I think, in an attempt to be more empathetic than thou with piles of anecdotal evidence that nobody really gives a shit about, people are conveniently forgetting that the extreme religious right has been the most destructive, and loudest, voice in American politics for the last few decades. I don't see this as being an indictment of the religious (Hey, I know decent religious people as well! Wow-neat!), but commentary on the perverse blend of capitalism, nationalism and religion that's stunted and plagued public policy and political discourse in recent times.

I wish I was as eloquent as this person because then, I could've saved myself alot of time.

---

chaostrophy
Member
(02-28-2013, 07:03 PM)

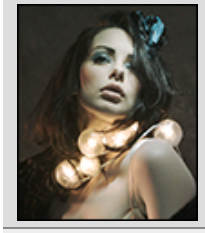
#190

> Originally Posted by **DocSeuss**
> I don't think I've ever seen a well-written religious character in games.

Guildenstern from Vagrant Story is a good one.

---

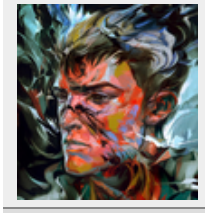
volturnus
Banned
(02-28-2013, 07:04 PM)



#191

Everything about this Comstock guy sounds like they're trying to create a convincing virtual Hitler, which is *very* boring, to be honest.

Remachinate
Member
(02-28-2013, 07:05 PM)



#192

> Originally Posted by **Zia**
> I don't see this as being an indictment of the religious (Hey, I know decent religious people as well! Wow-neat!), but commentary on the perverse blend of capitalism, nationalism and religion that's stunted and plagued public policy and political discourse in recent times.

I think the whole point of Ken's anecdote is that the employee saw the first version as about the former, which required a rewrite to focus on the latter.

Winterfang
Banned
(02-28-2013, 07:05 PM)

#193

Though it was going to be an Atheist offended by the game pointing out religion as a solution to worlds problems or something.

GoddyofAus
Banned

#194

I think I can already see what it is that will paint the character of Comstock for us: Audio Diaries. **A**

(02-28-2013, 07:06 PM)

lot of Andrew Ryans complexities were explored in the diaries in BS1.

---

rothbart
Member
(02-28-2013, 07:06 PM)

#195

Wow. I can't think of a better way to kill my interest in a game than to tell me how powerful the religious content is/was (even if it's fairly limited to one part.)

That said, I wasn't going to buy this game anyway so I guess I can forgive him. LOL.

Dipswitch
Member
(02-28-2013, 07:06 PM)

#196

Sounds like Levine did the right thing. If the game content is polarizing to the point that it offended someone so severely in the extremely small sample group the game was exposed to, I can only imagine how it would be viewed when exposed to the wider audience.

Not saying you necessarily need to censor the hell out of content to try and please everyone. But if there's a way to get the same point across without that content, it's far better to go that route. No sense pissing sales away needlessly.

---

faridmon
Member
(02-28-2013, 07:07 PM)

#197

What religion are talking about? Some are more sensitive than others.

NoirVisage
Banned
(02-28-2013, 07:08 PM)

#198

Kudo's to Levine for trying to meet the fella in the middle, with the added benefit of further realizing a character.

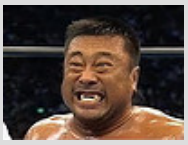
> Originally Posted by **DocSeuss**
>
> **This certainly increases my respect for the man. Too many people just seem to run ahead with absurd, offensive caricatures of religious characters (hi Infamous 2 and Resistance 3!), where they're portrayed as bizarrely superstitious (and not in a positive way, like, say, Native Americans) and incapable of any critical thought.**
>
> **This kind of caricature tends to come from people who aren't religious themselves. It's a rookie writing mistake. The train of thought is something like "oh, well, religion's obviously fake, so these people can't be logical at all." Problem is, humans are... significantly more complex than that. I live in a very science-driven community, but we also have a high degree of religious individuals here--and yes, there's a significant overlap. Lots of people here who are both religious and scientists. They're very logical, very rational, completely normal humans, not weirdos who think Satan's hiding behind every corner trying to get at them by way of black gay muslim atheists or something, but that's precisely the kind of caricature I see all too often.**
>
> **As a writer/writer wannabe, I've spent a lot of time studying people, just watching them, how they react to things, why they do what they do, and so on and so forth... and the way religious characters are portrayed is almost *exclusively* the sort of non-existent (unless, maybe, you count Fred Phelps' church or some of the more cult-like Christian offshoots) evangelical types.**
>
> **I don't think I've ever seen a well-written religious character in games.**
>
> Still, even if Levine revised his script, I find myself worrying. Comstock, after all, is a religious bad guy. If he's anything like the characters seen in Bioshock, he'll be, effectively, a

> hyperbolic literary device. Will he be balanced out with more reasonable characters? If you're having a hard time understanding the concerns I've got here, think of it like this: a writer establishes a 'ghetto' character who exists as an antagnost in the game. His portrayal is hyperbolic, but exists to point out the flaws in ghetto culture (and there are many). At worst, the writer runs the risk of coming across as saying "lol, black people suck," which, of course, isn't true.

I agree with all of that, well put.

Last edited by NoirVisage; 02-28-2013 at 07:10 PM.

badgenome
Member
(02-28-2013, 07:09 PM)

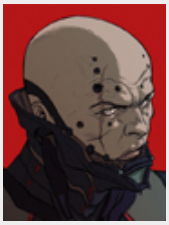


#199

> Originally Posted by **GillianSeed79**
> Nobody who followed Jim Jones probably though they'd end up in a commune in Africa drinking poisoned Kool Aid when they first joined his church, but how did they end up there?

Guyana is not in Africa.

RedSwirl
Junior Member
(02-28-2013, 07:10 PM)



#200

> Originally Posted by **Sheroking**
> As an atheist (who's not at all sad about this), I do find it interesting that basically every game that tackles religion seems anti-religion or positions religion to be on the wrong side. Assassin's Creed, FFX, Xenogears, etc.

I think one of the main problems with JRPGs like these is that their writers have probably had little-to-no contact with functioning Christianity.

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