

Emerging Discourses: eSports

Brody Moore

Heads Up Daily/Twitch

eSports is in its teenager stage right now. A little awkward but starting to find its way in the bigger sea of media. The industry is still being influenced by the elders, traditional sports, while adding its own flavour. eSports, much like traditional sports, is a form of competition with entertainment very much in mind. The first thing that comes to mind that eSports has that traditional sports has generally fallen behind on, is community and connectedness between all players, pros, and viewers. The advent of twitch introduced a new way to consume media: you don't just watch it, you interact with it. This established a core value of community among gamers; you are a key part in this whole scene.

Traditional sports tend to have this distance between professionals and everyone else involved in that specific sport. It's much harder to feel personally connected to a pro in the NHL or NFL than it is in the LCS or FGC. I think one of the biggest impacts eSports is going to have on traditional sports is the involvement in community that the pros will have. The more we get to indulge in the brands of the professionals in traditional sports, the more personal that scene becomes. Traditional professionals need to make themselves available, connected, and open to the community that supports them. We are beginning to see these things as they join up on twitter, with some even streaming on twitch. Cable companies need to begin to innovate and allow for these athletes to have these options like gamers do to stay connected to fans.

As a side effect, we will see an impact, not only on how fans interact with traditional pros, but how they consume media. In an age of decreasing cable sales, these companies must change, they must innovate, or they will die off and traditional sports will either fall with them or move onto new platforms.

As a third impact, I think technology generally used by gamers will slip its way into the traditional market, like Virtual Reality. Using VR to sell virtual tickets to large sporting events is a way to increase your viewer base and retain an easily accessible viewing experience.

This generation is blessed with new technology, a feeling of being connected to each other and community, and a general sense of having influence on their specific scenes. Traditional sports need to pick up on these things or eSports will be the new dominant media in the world. In all honesty, I think it's already too late for traditional sports, and personally, I don't have any problems with our soon-to-be New King, eSports.

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