



<https://gadgets.ndtv.com/games/news/gta-v-for-pc-delayed-minimum-requirements-announced-648242>

Within Grand Theft Auto (GTA) there is a major power imbalance between men and women. Within GTA 5s story mode, which would be what many people play, there are three main characters that you play as, all men. No GTA game to this date has had a female main character (“Grand Theft Auto 6 Needs A Female Protagonist”). The idea that there are no female playable characters is outrageous. The co-founder of Rockstar Games, creators of GTA, was quoted saying that “...being masculine was key to the story.”(Lambert) implying that no woman could do what the main characters do in this game. This is incredibly damaging to any young girl

who interacts with this game. It solidifies the idea that women cannot and are not the main character in the story. More so than that, it shows girls that they are nothing more than a side piece to the men in their life, further perpetuating the idea that every woman needs a man to serve. Outside of not being able to play as a woman in the story mode, women in the game are highly sexualized and often have no other purpose in the story. Even when trying to look at how female characters are displayed, the first things to show up were videos about the “prettiest girls in GTA” and how to get them to have sex with your character. In the story mode of GTA5, there seem to be very few females that show up, and the ones that do are either victims of whatever crime is happening or made to appear “crazy”. In the free play mode, female characters are prostitutes or strippers mainly and exist for the sole purpose of looking attractive. This not only makes it seem like women exist for men’s pleasure but also adds to unrealistic body standards as all of these women are skinny with large breasts. Along with this is another portal of terrible body standards, a store in the game called Anna Rex. Anna Rex is a clothing store within the game, not only does the name connect with Anorexia, an eating disorder with incredibly high numbers in the female population, but the billboards for this store feature dangerously skinny woman. When looking at three of these billboard posters the game's intention is very clear. In one photo there is a woman splayed out on the ground, in her underwear, with a partially eaten apple appearing to have fallen from her hand. Another one is in the same position and style, but the woman has a bottle of pills instead of the apple. The last picture is a woman standing, but

doubled over, and connected to puppet strings. Each of these women are made to look sexy in the positions that they are in (“Anna Rex”). These photos are dangerous to women on so many levels as they are not only giving unrealistic body images but they are also condoning eating disorders as a method to reach what they consider “sexy”.

While women in this game are highly sexualized, the men in the game also have harmful stereotypes cast upon them. The most apparent is the toxic masculinity that is displayed throughout the entire game. The men in the game only care about violence, crime, and sex. There is very little character development within the game and the main activities you can, especially outside of the story mode, are kill or hurt people, steal cars, and have sex with strippers and prostitutes. This is teaching young boys that they don’t need to have respect for those around them and that they can simply take whatever they want. It condones violence and portrays it as what you need to be a true man. Not only was the co-founders comment about masculinity harmful to women playing the game, but it was also harmful to the men. By claiming that those actions are masculine, you force those same ideals on the people playing the game. While it may not necessarily insinuate more violence it will put toxic ideas into people’s heads. It adds with the toxic masculinity present in the world currently and teaches young boys that it is okay to act like that and there will be no repercussions if you do.

For many years GTA has been seen by many as too violent and gruesome for people to play. That being said, some people refuse to look at the sexual injustices that seem to come with it. As much as I would like to believe that the material from this game is not reaching the younger population, I know it is not true. I've witnessed high school and middle school students talking about these games and how much they loved playing them. It teaches young kids, both males and females, that this is how you should act and this is how society sees you. This game includes sexist remarks, storylines, and actions against both men and women that will continue to create unrealistic ideals for people.

## Work Cited Page

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