Unorthodox Professors: WWI in videogames and on YouTube

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1. Background
- Videogames are becoming increasingly popular in today's world. 
- 77% of men and 57% of women between 18 - 29 have played videogames.
- Historical videogames dominate the market. Battlefield 1 contributed to EA’s 7.4% increase in revenues for the third quarter of 2016 and Call of Duty had its beginnings in the historical videogame market, depicting WWII.
- YouTube boasts over a billion users and reaches more 18 - 34 and 18 - 49 year old audiences than any cable network in the United States.

2. Videogames
- Battlefield 1 has a destruction system, where the landscape changes and craters are left. Trenches are often not in the game and the weapons used (the tanks, rifles, etc.) are generally too modern.
- Victoria II does not depict actual combat. Instead, this game allows you to play any nation in 1836 and guide it until 1936. WWII can come about through an international crisis and this game also forces you to research technology and become a great power.
- Crash Course World History is a YouTube series which examines the past and makes it relatable to the average audience. Its series on WWI goes over the causes of the war, but does not place blame on any one nation or leader, unlike many academic articles.
- History Respawned attempts to reconcile videogames and history, while being a series on YouTube.
- The Great War is a series which goes through WWI week by week and also uploads in-depth videos about nations, leaders and technology.

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4. Conclusion
- Videogames and YouTube are great ways for students and the average learner to gain an awareness of WWI. Given the relative lack of attention this war has received (as compared to WWII), these mediums serve as a positive. However, we must be careful with the inaccuracies that can occur as a result of these mediums. Videogames and YouTube are entertainment, after all, and lack the in-depth analysis that a historian could provide when interpreting the past.
- As a result: historians should seek to become more involved as editors and consultants on videogame and YouTube projects so we can ensure accuracy, while also acknowledging when people need to have fun with history.

5. References

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