# CHAPTER I

# INTRODUCTION

## A. Background of Study

Video games are a form of interactive digital entertainment that can be engaged with through a computer, a gaming console such as the Xbox or PlayStation, or a mobile device. (Owen, 2016). Digital entertainment is experiencing rapid development (Hakim, 2021). The increasingly rapid development of digital entertainment has led to the creation of video games with various genres (Pavlovic, 2020). The genre that gamers are most interested in at the moment is the action shooter war genre (Clement, 2023). Action shooter war games have become a very significant genre in the gaming world in the past couple of years, this causes video game developers to compete to create war action games (GameRefinery, 2022).

The increasing interest in war action genre video games has led video game developers to make innovations, one of which is making war video games adapted from original historical events (Barnes & Green, 2017). Video games that adapt historical events also have two versions, adapting factual historical events and adapting counterfactual historical events. video games that adapt historical events factually are video games that adapt historical events according to the facts that occurred, while video games that adapt historical events counterfactually are video games that adapt historical events but distort the facts or turn original history into fiction (McCall & Chapman, 2017, 2018). One example of a historical video game

that adapts historical events counterfactually is Wolfenstein and one example of a historical video game that adapts historical events factually is the *Call of Duty: WWII*

*Call of Duty: WWII 2* is a video game developed by Sledgehammer Games and published by Activision Games in 2017. Activision released this video game as the successor to the Call of Duty World at War series. Unlike the previous series which focused on the Pacific battles and the Eastern European front, this second series tells the perspective of the United States in liberating Western Europe from the shackles of Nazi Germany. Call of Duty: WWII narrates the story of a soldier named Ronald Daniels who is deployed from the beginning of the battle on the Western European front to the end of the battle. Along his journey, he meets several friends, including Drew Stiles, Frank Aiello, Joseph Turner, and Robert Zussman.

Robert Zussman is a side character who assists Daniels in his missions. In this video game, it is told that Zussman is an American soldier of Jewish faith. In one mission titled "Ambush," the mission does not go according to plan, and Zussman is captured by German Nazi soldiers. Before the prisoners are taken to prison, the German Nazi soldiers segregate the prisoners based on their religion. Zussman and some Jewish prisoners feel discrimination, oppression, and violence from the German Nazi soldiers, and from then on, the suffering of Zussman and the Jewish prisoners begins.

The mission "Epilogue" tells the story of Daniels searching for his friend Zussman. Daniels searches through various German Nazi prisoner camps and concentration camps. In these camps, there is ample evidence of the cruelty of the

German Nazis towards the prisoners, especially those of Jewish faith. Jewish people are killed, tortured, and hanged, resulting in horrific scenes. While inspecting these camps, Daniels eventually finds Zussman, who is nearly killed by a German Nazi soldier but is rescued by Daniels just in time. Zussman's condition is very concerning. After the war ends, Zussman tells Daniels how hopeless he and other Jewish prisoners felt inside the German Nazi concentration camps. The horrifying experience leaves Zussman traumatized and proves how cruel the German Nazis were in discriminating against the Jewish people.

The Jewish was one of the parties affected by the Second World War. The Jews experienced discrimination, oppression, massacres, and other cruel things because the Jewish race was the race most hated by Adolf Hitler (Muhibbuddin, 2020: 211). Discrimination made Jews leave Germany during Nazi rule in Germany. Jews emigrated to France, England, and other countries, especially the United States (Wischnitzer, 1940). Jewish migration to the United States caused many Jews to join the United States military to fight the Nazis and return to Germany (Henderson, 2017). The story of the struggle of German Jews in fighting the Nazis became a reference for Sledgehammer Games to introduce a side character named Zussman in the video game *Call of Duty WWII*. In the "Ambush" mission, Zussman's character is captured by Nazi troops, and at the end of the mission, there is a cutscene where Zussman is treated with discrimination and violence by Nazis because Zussman is a Jew.

In this study, researchers will analyse the representation of American Jewish prisoner of war discrimination in the *Call of Duty WWII* video game. To help

researchers analyse the representation of American Jewish prisoner of war discrimination in the video game *Call of Duty WWII*, researchers will use sociological and semiotic approaches and will use critical race and semiotic theory.

The researcher provides a disclaimer that the researcher do not directly support the human crimes committed by Zionist Israelis against Palestinians. All forms of colonialism and violence in the world must be eradicated because freedom is the right of all nations. The researcher fully supports the independence of Palestine.

## B. Problem Formulation

1. What are the specific character portrayals in *'Call of Duty: WWII'* that depicted the theme of American Jewish prisoner of war discrimination?

2. What is a denotative and connotative element of discrimination against American Jewish prisoner of war as represented in the video game *Call of Duty WWII*?

## C. Objective of Studies

1. To describe the specific character portrayals in *'Call of Duty: WW II'* that depicted the theme of American Jewish prisoner of war discrimination.

2. To analyse the denotative and connotative elements of discrimination of American Jewish prisoner of war as represented in the video game *Call of Duty WWII.*

## D. Review Related Studies

The first previous research in 2021 which was conducted by Huber Kilian, Lindenthal Volker, and Waldinger Fabian discussed the way Jews were treated during the Nazi Germany era and aims to Examine the impact on major companies when senior Jewish executives were dismissed as a result of increasing discrimination in Nazi Germany. This research used quantitative Methods to analyse Companies that had hired managers of Jewish heritage but could not find suitable replacements for them. This research uses Gery Becker's theory of Economic Discrimination. This research found that the performance of a company is significantly influenced by individual managers. Discriminating against competent business leaders results in primary economic setbacks (Huber & Lindenthal & Waldinger, 2021).

The second Previous research in 2021 which was conducted by Stein Marguerite Minah discussed the Continuation of Classic Hollywood Stereotypes in Contemporary Television which aims to Examine the occurrence of Jewish stereotypes in today's television by scrutinizing and discussing three of the most well-liked current TV series. Delve into the subtleties and intricacies of how Jewish characters are portrayed. This research used qualitative Methods to analyze Big Mouth, The Goldbergs, and Schitt's Creek American TV Series. This research uses

film and phenomenology theory proposed by Allan Casebier. This research found that while attempts are being made to challenge certain misconceptions about Jews, other enduring Jewish stereotypes continue to find favour in television. These stereotypes pose a detriment to the Jewish community as they not only perpetuate but also intensify anti-Semitic beliefs among viewers (Stein, 2021).

The third previous research in 2022 which was conducted by Sulam Simon Levis, Minello Giorgia, Tripodi Rocco, and Warglien Massimo discussed employing a distant reading approach to investigate how discourse on Jews in France evolved during the 19th century which aims to Examine an extensive collection of diverse texts, encompassing literary works, periodicals, songs, essays, and historical accounts, with the aim of tracking the evolution of connections between Jews and various semantic contexts over time. This research used qualitative Methods to analyze examining texts and historical context has directed our focus to the importance during this period of portraying Jews and making references to Jews, encompassing both favorable and unfavorable portrayals, though the latter prevailing in the literary works. This research found that Contrary to the limited perspective of a few historians, this period holds the potential for discovering the origins of cultural and political disputes related to Jews. These issues would later manifest significantly, around 20 to 30 years after this time, in the form of the Dreyfus affair. This particular event has been seen as a critical precursor to the tragic evolution of anti-Semitism in the 20th century (Sullam & Minello & Tripodi & Warglien, 2022).

The fourth Previous research in 2020 which was conducted by Liebe Ulf and Beyer Heiko discussed the encounters with discrimination and the sense of threat felt by Jews residing in Germany. and aims to examine the scope and determinants of hate crimes linked to anti-Semitic prejudice in Germany. This research used a quantitative Method to analyse a survey of the Jewish community. This research This study explores the ordeals faced by Jews residing in Germany, which encompass instances of mistreatment, verbal abuse, property damage, and physical harm that occurred within the five years leading up to the survey. Additionally, the researchers delve into the expressed apprehension of potentially falling victim to anti-Semitic attacks in the future. The findings reveal that 7% of the surveyed group (comprising 1,225 individuals) reported incidents of violence and vandalism, while 44% experienced harassment over the past five years due to their Jewish identity. In particular, those who visibly identify as Jewish, often by wearing relevant symbols, were affected, and, on occasion, refrained from visiting certain local areas due to safety concerns (Liebe & Beyer, 2020).

The fifth previous research in 2019 which was conducted by Wolf-Meyer discussed Research Critical Race Theory (CRT) explores various avenues of inquiry, examining how white dominant culture affects marginalized communities in nuanced and profound ways that may not be immediately apparent. For instance, Wolf-Meyer (2019) conducts an analysis of how dominant culture is promoted and perpetuated within apocalyptic and fictional narratives. By focusing on the representation of race in the sci-fi dystopian classic film "RoboCop" (Schmidt & Verhoeven, 1987), the researcher highlights the significant lack of diversity and the

propagation of white supremacist ideology. In this narrative, the salvation of the city of Detroit hinges on the creation of an android, RoboCop, whose essence embodies that of a white man nostalgic for a pre-crisis Detroit awaiting gentrification into Delta City (Wolf-Meyer, 2019, p.32). The film underscores RoboCop's role as the sole law enforcer capable of combating corruption, gang activity, and drug trafficking to restore peace to Detroit (The Numbers, n.d.). Consequently, RoboCop assumes the archetype of the "White saviour" and becomes Detroit's guardian, despite the city's predominantly Black population in reality. Notably, black characters in the film are relegated to roles as henchmen or insignificant figures, reinforcing the implication that in the depicted future, non-white races hold little significance (Wolf-Meyer, 2019).

In several previous studies, a gap was found between this research. In previous research, previous researchers used economic, antisemitism, and film phenomenology theories to analyse the representation of Jews while in this research, researchers will analyse the representation of Jewish discrimination in the *Call of Duty: WWII* video game using critical race and semiotic theories.

## E. Method of Research

In this research, researchers used qualitative research methods. Qualitative research is a systematic and flexible research approach that aims to understand, interpret, and describe complex social phenomena by gathering and analysing non-numerical data, such as interviews, observations, documents, or artifacts. It

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emphasizes context, context-specific meanings, and the exploration of multiple perspectives to generate rich, in-depth insights into the subject of study (Yin, 2016).

1. **Data and Source of Data**

   a. **Primary Data Sources**, at this stage the data comes from the video game *Call of Duty: WWII*

   b. **Secondary Data Sources**, Secondary data sources include information obtained through research articles, journals, and online articles that are directly related to the topic to be discussed.

2. **Data Collecting Technique**

   In this research, researchers will use observing data collection techniques. In a book entitled "Qualitative Research from Start to Finish" written by Robert K. Yin, there are four data collection methods including interviewing, observing, collecting, and feeling (Yin, 2016: 139). One of the data collection methods is observation. Observing is a highly valuable method for data collection because it allows researchers to directly witness and perceive information without the influence of others' perspectives. As a result, researchers' observations represent unfiltered, first-hand data, making them a precious form of primary information (Yin, 2016: 150).

The data collecting procedure is done as follows:

1. Playing the video game *Call of Duty: WWII.*

2. Observe the discrimination elements that related.

3. Screen capture the scene that become the object of this research.

4. Analyse the data by implementing the theories of this research.

### 3. Data Analysing Technique

Analysing qualitative data, according to Robert K. Yin, can be defined as the systematic process of examining and interpreting non-numerical information and evidence gathered through various qualitative research methods. This analysis aims to uncover patterns, themes, and insights within the data, with a focus on understanding the underlying context, relationships, and the meaning attributed to the phenomena under investigation. (Yin, 2016: 184-185).

In this research, the researcher uses a method representation method to analyse data. This method helps the researcher express the importance found in a particular scene or text. Through representation, researchers create meaning and then share it with people in the same cultural group (Natha, 2017:3). The scene or text studied in this research is the *Call of Duty: WWII* video game. Through this technique, it is hoped that researchers can reveal and explain in detail how discrimination against American Jewish prisoner of war is displayed in the Call of Duty WWII video game.

## F. Presentation

This undergraduate thesis consists of four chapters and each of them is divided into some subdivisions. The first chapter is an introduction that consists of the background of studies, problem formulation, objectives of the study, review of related studies, method of research, and presentation. The second chapter is the theoretical approach and framework. The third chapter is about finding and analysis. And the fourth chapter is conclusion.