

**Is Resident Evil Fan Base a Discourse Community**

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What is a discourse community, and are the fans of Resident Evil who contribute to the community considered a discourse community? The Resident Evil fan base is a sub-division of another subdivision called Survivor Horror. Survival horror is a genre of video games characterized by survival in a terrifying environment; Resident Evil being a subdivision helps it fit the term of a discourse community. Like Swales stated, a discourse community is a group with a broadly agreed-upon set of goals and ways to communicate throughout the group, using specific vocabulary and certain expectations. The unique and fascinating vocabulary of Resident Evil video game fans, distinct to their discourse community, is not just a tool for communication but a badge of exclusivity. This exclusivity is a crucial aspect of the Resident Evil fan base, creating a profound sense of belonging among its members. Therefore, with those definitions and factors, fans of Resident Evil video games fit a discourse community in three ways: sharing profound common goals/rules, communicating/interacting in the community, and vocabulary/terms. This sense of belonging makes the Resident Evil fan base a unique and inclusive discourse community.

The first-way Resident Evil is a discourse community through its common goals/rules. This can be shown through some of the rules set in a fan site for Resident Evil fans: "While we welcome discussing and debating issues, we will not tolerate insulting comments, personal attacks, slandering or intentionally argumentative posts (trolling)...Posting, emailing or private messaging with the intent to advertise or "spam" links is not permitted and will result in an instant ban...The staff reserve the right to edit or delete any posts or threads without notice, including the expulsion of unruly members."(Steve,2009). These rules are not just guidelines but play a significant role in

shaping the community and maintaining its integrity, emphasizing the importance of structure and order in the Resident Evil community. They ensure that every member feels safe and respected, contributing to the overall sense of community.

The second-way Resident Evil is considered a discourse community is through its communication and interactions. This can be shown in two ways: “(1) the context in which the discourse occurs—actors outside of gaming continually seek to define and shape the community—and (2) the nature of the discursive response—discourse of gaming operates across numerous discursive genres and with distinctive discursive mechanisms.” (Perreault & Lynch, 2022). Actors/members of the communities can shape the community through games, reviews, or commentary on the Resident Evil games. This is shown through YouTubers like Residence of Evil, Gameranx, and Sphere Hunter, who make videos talking about these games and their lore or how these games hold up after years have passed. These YouTubers/streamers also make Let's Play about the game, where they record or stream themselves playing it to completion and post it on their channels so community members can view it. Some channels review these games, like Ign, and discuss whether they are good overall. These same YouTubers use apps like Discord, twitch, and YouTube community sections to communicate with their fans.

The third way is through the type of vocabulary used in the community. For example, an enemy type like a Tyrant will not have the same meaning outside the community. Still, within the community, it means “A series of human bio-weapons produced by Umbrella to have more beneficial effects of the Progenitor Virus. Due to a genetic rarity in those who can become Tyrants (one in ten million individuals, as

counted in the late 1980s), Umbrella and later groups relied on cloning mutants, the T-103 being one such example of a whole series of clones.” (*Glossary*). This unique vocabulary, rich in detail and depth, is a hallmark of the Resident Evil community. Another example of this is the term G-Virus. The term G-Virus stands for this in the Resident Evil community: “An RNA virus recovered from the body of Lisa Trevor and further enhanced by Dr. William Birkin. G-Virus can revive the dead, and forces constant mutations on its hosts to counter environmental conditions and keep them alive after sustaining serious bodily harm.” (*Glossary*). This term is meant for an in-game virus with essential game story points. Therefore, many of these terms are exclusive to community members.

An alternate point of view that individuals may have is that Resident Evil isn't a discourse community because it has a large community; however, a discourse community can be any size. Therefore, the size of the community doesn't matter. Another point of view on why the Resident Evil community can't be a discourse community is the fact that it's a subcategory of another subcategory called Survival Horror, which is a subcategory of Action and adventure. Action and adventure are a game genre that contains a lot of nonstop fighting and exploration. Hence, individuals don't believe it's a discourse community but just another subcategory. However, it is still a discourse community because discourse communities come in different shapes and sizes, even if they are from a sub-category.

As the Resident Evil series evolves and new games are released, the community will likely adapt and grow, further solidifying its status as a discourse community. In conclusion, this is proven by the three ways/factors: common goals/rules,

communicating/interacting in the community, and vocabulary/terms. The rules and goals of the community will help bring new members not to break the rules or overstep the boundaries, causing more content to be created in the form of Let's Plays, reviews, or how a game is holding up over time. The new game releases will add more terms to the community that will be exclusive to this community, making them unique and giving the members a sense of belonging.

“Works”

*Glossary*. (n.d.). Resident Evil Wiki.

[https://residentevil.fandom.com/wiki/Resident\\_Evil\\_Wiki:Glossary](https://residentevil.fandom.com/wiki/Resident_Evil_Wiki:Glossary)

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