INTRO:
- In order to trace the impact of real-world allegations of misconduct in virtual fan communities, a series of cases must be looked at. It is critical to understand this issue in order to contain it and prevent it from further corrupting these communities.

Raising awareness and providing new, insider information will contribute to the minimization of "grooming" and other methods of taking advantage of women and children.

By first understanding the situation, the next step is to take these scandals are seriously as those covered by mainstream media. If they are not taken seriously, the numbers of allegations will continue to grow, and more vulnerable people will be taken advantage of.

EXAMPLES:
“Smash Bros.” tournaments consist of mostly underage fans of the game, considering children are the target audience for games made by Nintendo. However, older fans are also interested in the competitive appeal of the party game, creating a mix between the two. In an unsupervised setting, where the older fans have power over the younger fans, it's a recipe for disaster.

During July of 2020, smash player Sky Williams had been accused of permitting sexual misconduct under his “Sky House” system. These houses were places hosted by Sky Williams, where smash players could stay or live at and party. Unfortunately, however, these were privately run unsupervised settings for minors to hang out with older fans to a higher extent.

Over 50 “Smash Bros.” competitive players & commentators were outed in July of 2020 for taking advantage of minors.

What about video game messages? Have developers tried to make games more socially aware?

Despite its progressive plot & overall message, these issues bleed into the competitive “Overwatch” esports scene as well.

In fact, at this level of play, you begin to see certain patterns similar to that of the smash community.

Many professional “Overwatch” players have been removed from their platform for taking advantage of women.

BACKGROUND & STUDIES:
It seems that many of these esports players tend to be introverted, with not much social interaction in their lives. Thus, when a girl seems to be “worshiping” them as an idol, they see it as fair game.

According to Statista, almost half of all gamers in the US are female, and according to The Guardian, 70% of gamers in the UK are female.

So what can we do to minimize risks of women & minors being taken advantage of?

Despite being roughly half of the gaming demographic, women are still treated as lesser, and often as objects.

I believe in mass awareness & education. If people are taught at a young age about the dangers of the internet, the concept of consent, the especially concept of "grooming," it can go a long way.