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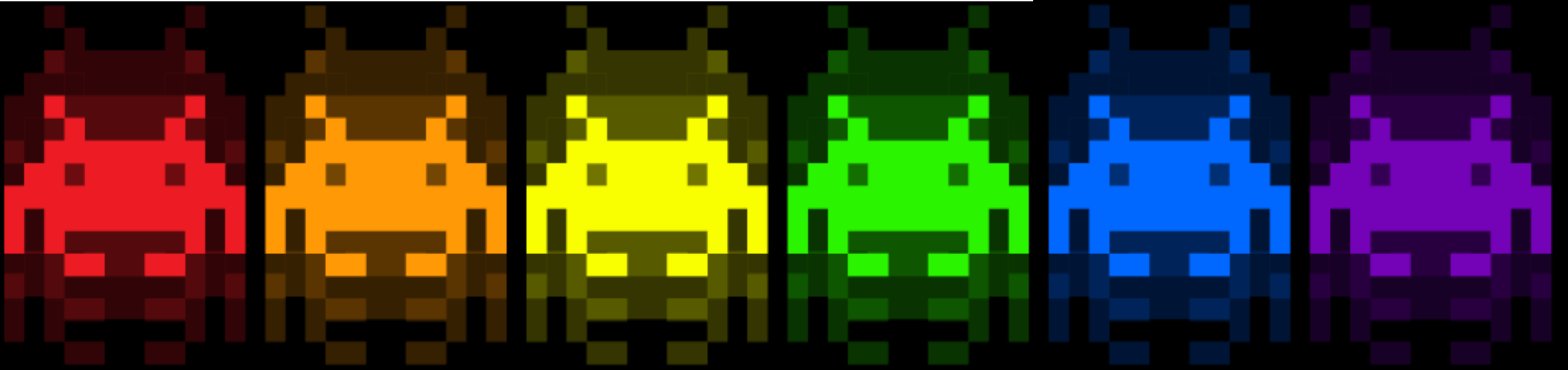
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What are the social forces which constrain queer people, and how might the digital age offer resistance to this?



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MARIO
058700

×20

WORLD
1-4

TIME
200

THANK YOU MARIO!

BUT OUR PRINCESS IS IN
ANOTHER CASTLE!



My early life...



1986



1991



1994



2002



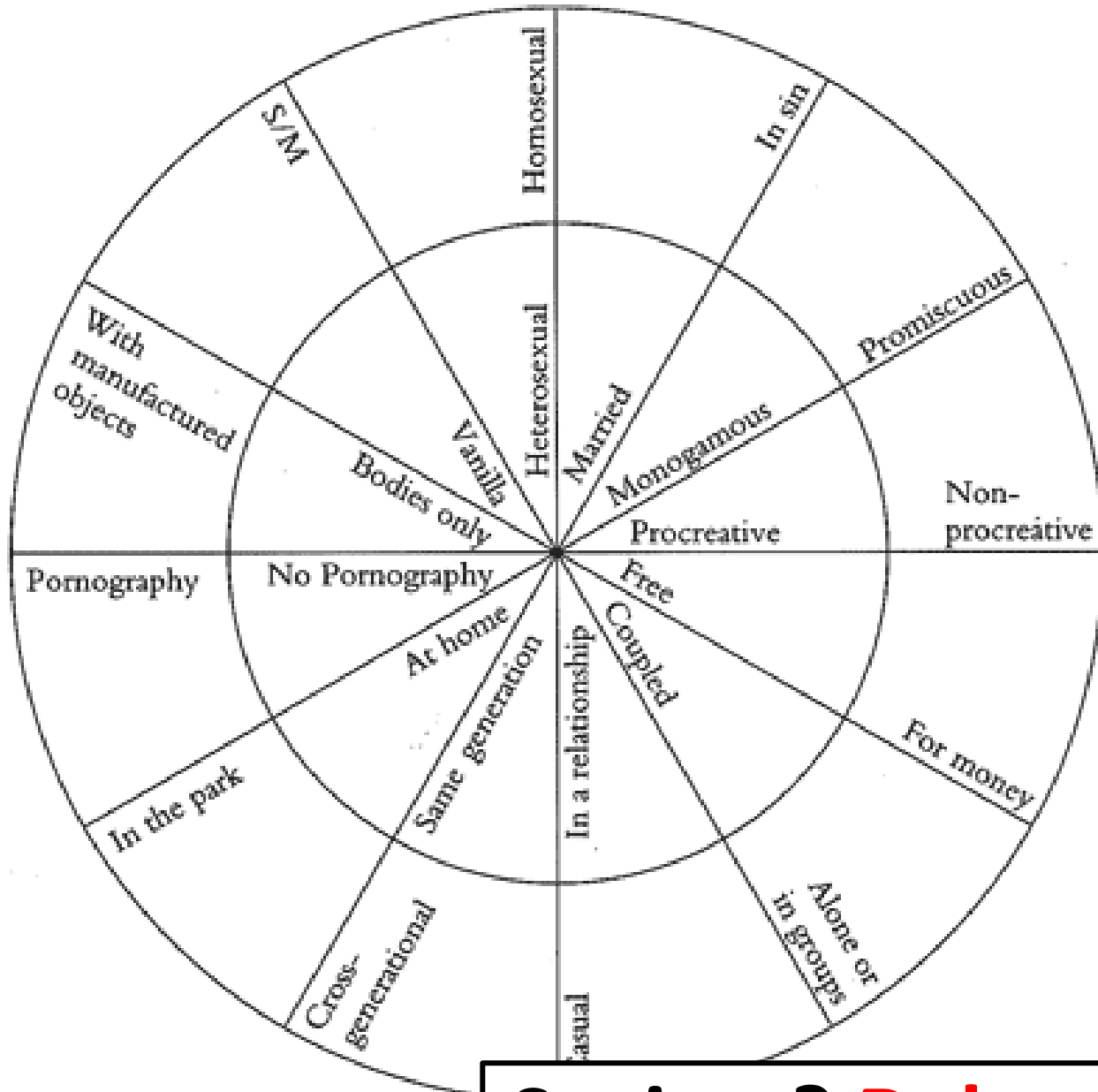
NOW

What? A woman? Metroid (1986)

heteronormative

adj. • het·ero·nor·ma·tive • \,hē-tə-rō-'nōr-mə-tiv\

of, relating to, or based on the attitude that heterosexuality is the only normal and natural expression of sexuality

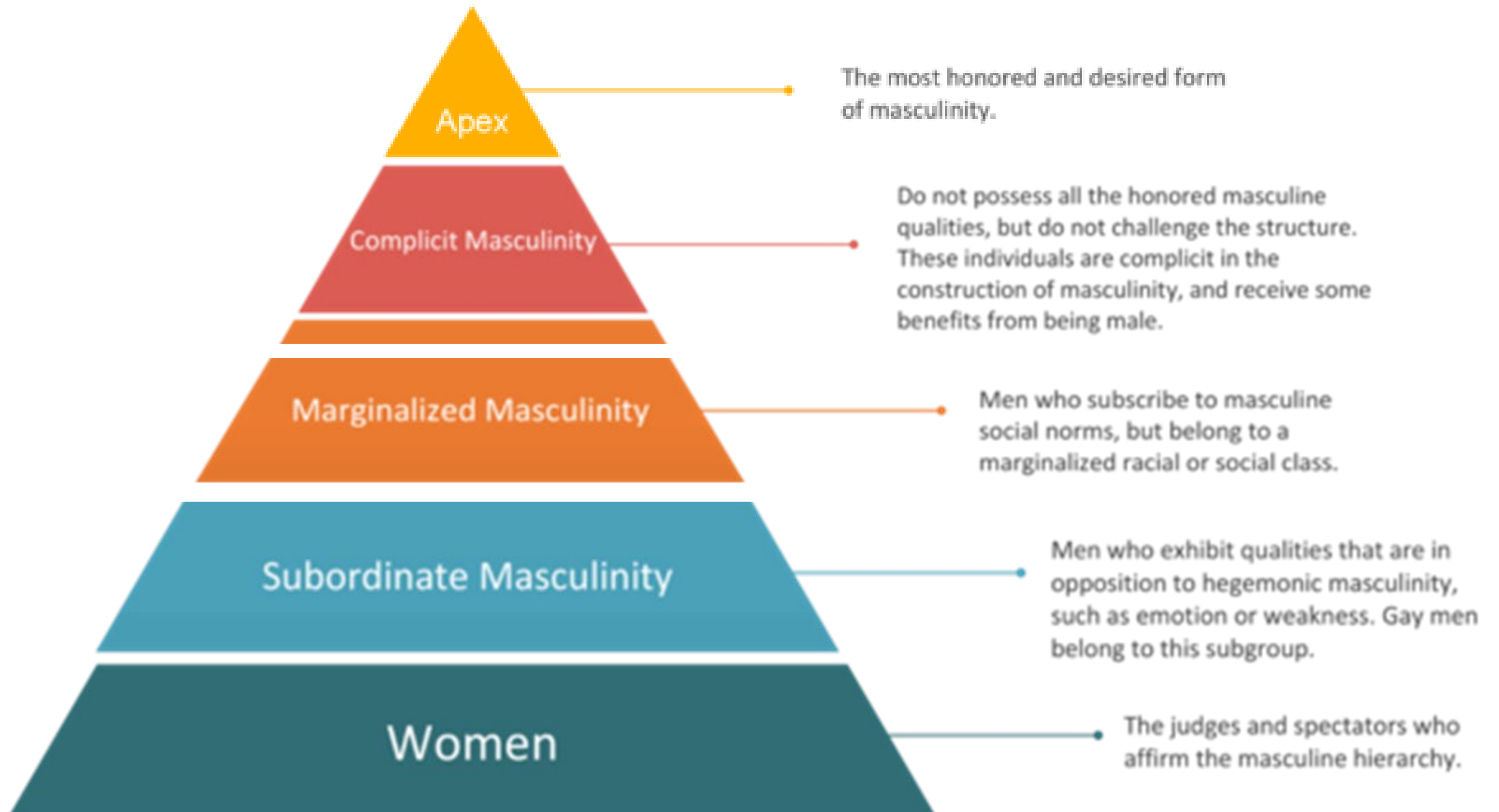


Society? Ruben's (1984) 'Charmed Circle'

Isn't homo/bi/transphobia just a 'fear' though?
Plummer's (2014) 'Gender Taboo Theory'



R W Connell 'Hegemonic Masculinity'

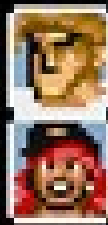


What does the research say?

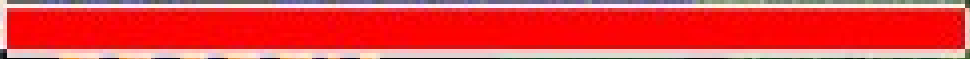
- **Greer (2018)** explored thousands of gaming titles and **found 179 games with any queer representation.**
- Of those 179 games, **only 83 have queer characters who are playable characters.**
- Of these 83, **only 8 featured a main character who is explicitly pre-written as queer,** as opposed to them being queer as a character creation option.
- Queer characters in games often suffer from the **'bury your gays' trope,** a long-lasting narrative convention (from Hollywood) that requires that queer characters die or meet another unhappy ending.
- Men portrayed as **sissy, effeminate, flamboyant in dress or speech, leading to a comical 'gender confusion.'**
- "Gay gamers experience a double-edged sword of prejudice... The mainstream gay culture and media is not supportive of video games. Then you have the video game culture that is not supportive of gay culture. So, you have these people stuck in the middle who have this double-edged prejudice" **(Sliwinski, 2006).**
- **World of Warcraft LGBTQ Guilds** threatened by Administrators (2006).



Streets of Rage 3: 'Ash'



CODY = 01002823



POISON



1002823
TIME
77

PUSH START



Don't hit women, hit transgender women!
Foxy and Poison (Final Fight, 1990)



The Sims as 'roommates' (Sims 1) or 'convert your community' (Sims 3)



The ridicule of **Birdo**

Have a partnership...if you're straight! Tomodachi Life

The image shows a promotional graphic for the video game Tomodachi Life. At the top, a white banner with a black border contains the text "Have a partnership...if you're straight! Tomodachi Life" in bold black font. Below this, a large white banner features the text "YOUR FRIENDS. YOUR DRAMA. YOUR LIFE." in red, slanted, uppercase letters. The main title "TOMODACHI LIFE" is written in large, colorful, rounded letters: "TOMO" in orange, "DACHI" in green, and "LIFE" in blue. The background is a vibrant, cartoonish scene with various characters from the game, including a girl with blonde hair, a boy with a surprised expression, and a girl with a blue dress. There are also musical notes and other colorful elements scattered around.

YOUR FRIENDS. YOUR DRAMA. YOUR LIFE.

TOMO DACHI LIFE™

"The relationship options in the game represent a playful alternate world rather than a real-life simulation. We hope that all of our fans will see that 'Tomodachi Life' was intended to be a whimsical and quirky game, and that we were absolutely not trying to provide social commentary" (Nintendo)

What about now? Resistance?

- **Dragon Age: Inquisition, Life is Strange, Hades, Ikenfell, Tell Me Why, Assassins Creed Odyssey, Dream Daddy: A Dad Dating Simulator, Mass Effect: Andromeda, Overwatch...**
- **Finally, you can get married and have children in The Sims 4...**
- **“When looking at the game genres, it can be concluded that LGBTQ representation happens mostly in RPGs, Adventure and Action games, in that order. The other three genres present in the analysis, Fighting, Simulation and Shooters, weren’t as representative” (Utsch, et al, 2017).**
- **Change is happening, but the effects of the charmed circle and hegemonic masculinity are still there...power of globalisation?**



