Table Jockeys and virtual legends

UH Manoa has a great number of hangouts for people to catch up with one another and have a good time. A resource within the Upper campus holds a place for entertainment and leisure hangout. Many people have come to use it whether it is for its activities or as a place of convenience to study. This place is known as the Gameroom.

Located on the lower level of Campus center, the Gameroom houses two different cultures. The people here are known as the table jockeys and the virtual legends. Though not all people receive this status, most people can recognize who they are. A veteran table jockey is calm with his movement, using his cue accurately and skillfully as he strategies his playing field. A veteran virtual legend is very similar to that of a table jockey, remaining calm and instead of jamming buttons, creating combos for a more efficient win.

An aggressive player sits next to me, preparing to play a game of “left 4 dead.” As the zombies comes shrieking, the player lets off a large amount of vulgarity and questioning himself “How the hell,” not finishing his own sentence. His concentration is set but his poor sportsmanship gets him enraged when he begins to lose. To the right of us, I can hear the SSB (Super Smash Bros.) players getting excited about there near death experiences and wonders of how one another survived. Both the aggressive player and the excited player lose their concentration when they begin to lose. Relatively new players tend to do this and only after they realize that getting mad at the game doesn’t do anything (Because your controlling everything), they begin their journey in becoming a veteran by relaxing themselves and better understanding the game. As time progresses, the players begin to sit from leaning forward, to straight up and finally, slouched down. Relaxed, players begin to expertise in their game, receiving five star ratings on rock band, overkill in Halo 3, 5 lives left in SSB, and the list goes on and on.

The lowlight, creatively structured room has a sort of mesmerizing appeal. As students pass by to get their lunches from taco bell or pizza hut, they cannot help but to stop and look at what is going on within the game room. The loud noises and sound of media from a television four times the size of a person in length can be heard once a person enters through the doorway. Along with these noises, the breaking of the table jockeys can be heard as they begin their matches.

“Pool is like sniping, you take a deep breath, still your movements, and fire.” Bending from the waist with his legs spread shoulder width apart, having the left leg a little farther back than the other, the table jockey shoots his cue at the white target ball sinking in the number seven solid ball. Once again bending from the waist, a 90 degree angled arm and the cue between two fingers, he fires again sinking the number two solid ball. Spotting a veteran jockey can be sometimes difficult. Each has their preference of
cue stick, holding position and whether to use chalk, a glove or just bare hand. The thing a
teen can be notice by is how he plays. The initial break has a lot of force, sometimes
accompanied by a jump so the player can put his body force into the shot. Following the
break, the table jockey is very graceful with hitting the balls, getting the right force and
angle for a ball to find one of the six pockets it can be sunk in. Each player holds his or
her cue uniquely, whether it is with the index finger over the cue having the stick rest on
the middle finger, or the index finger bent and the cue resting on the knuckle of the index
finger. Though there are more variations, these two are the most commonly seen holding
positions used by the veterans.

All of these table jockeys have different skills whether it is from spin shots, bank
shots, or jump shots. Each is a strategic move that requires an excessive amount of skill
to perform. Spin shots are performed by hitting the edge of the ball causing, it to spin in
the opposite direction. Hitting the ball of off one of the four surrounding “banks” and
hitting a ball when a straight shot is not available is a bank shot. Finally, the hardest
move to do successfully is the jump shot. Hitting the lower side of the cue to make the
ball jump over another ball when there is no straight or bank shot available does a jump
shot. Even the veterans here have difficulty with this, mainly because the cues are not
that great.

These two cultures have managed to carry out their daily routines without harm
from the other party. Almost mesmerizing, these two both share a common superior
known as the counter worker. The counter worker provides all the materials needed for
these two cultures to thrive and further hone their skills at their respective arts. All it
really takes is a person to provide a gift in the shape of a rectangle that is rather flat. All
of these gifts seem to be made from plastic and have a small marking on the back
indicating their eligibility. The only exception is that the counter worker expects another
gift for the time the table jockeys reside within the area. Similar to the first gift, it is in
rectangular shape but is about twice the length of the plastic gift and is made from paper.
These gifts all have strange marking on both the front and back indicating its worth. If a
table jockey does not have enough of these at present, he provides the counter worker
with a small round piece of metal that has its worth indicated by the size of the piece.

The interesting part of these two cultures is that they welcome anyone. All are
teachers as well as pupils, vying to be the best in their group. Both have been around for a
reasonable time and I suspect that their culture will not die out anytime soon because of
how enthralling these two cultures arts are.
Meta-Commentary

After trying observations at Ching Complex, I decided to change places because there were not a lot of people that used this area and it was difficult to find information about it. I switched my place to the gameroom since I have visited this area a lot during my first few months at UH. I switched the focus of research (I think that was the difference for this essay versus the other two before this one) to about the people and some simple observations of the place that I had made. I had made it similar to the reading we had about the Nacirema people but could probably use some working on. I had a bit of trouble with the transitions and many places don’t have any which I hope I can fix by the next due date. The peer review had helped me get a better understanding of what the essay is suppose to look like since I was able to hear two other place essays for UH Manoa.

I wish to elicit that simple things such as the two peoples arts are not as easy as it seems. Both can be considered a sport and takes lots of practice for one to become as skilled as so many people have seen. Its not just a matter of hitting balls or pressing buttons but getting the right techniques for each to have a more successful play.

My purpose is to let people know about the gameroom and what it houses. It is a place for people to play games but it is also a nice place to cool down in A/C and get some homework done. It is at a convenient location and depending on what you do it can cost you a lot or nothing. It is a really good place to help with budgeting thoughts and still get in some entertainment and fun time for a person and maybe a couple of their friends.