

# Women Game Makers Speak Out

*By John Vanderhoef*

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In response to a tweeted question from a fellow gamer – “Why are there so few lady game creators?” – women (and some men) across the games industry took to Twitter on Nov. 26 & 27 to reflect on gender discrimination in the sector.

Users marked the debate with the hashtag #1reasonwhy as a way to prompt reflections on why game makers don’t employ more women. While trade publications, enthusiast blogs, and academics have seriously engaged this question over the last decade, the debate itself has never been the subject of such a public forum.



**Luke Crane** @Burning\_Luke

26 Nov

Why are there so few lady game creators?

Expand

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Here are some key resources for further reading:

- You can find a few collections of #1reasonwhy tweets [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#). Together, the tweets illuminate a litany of discrimination charges against the games industry and offer first-hand accounts of the workplace experiences of many

women game makers.

- Many of the tweets accused game companies of sexist hiring practices. While various [surveys](#) and [reports](#) provide differing numbers for women in the games industry, all agree it hovers somewhere between 6 to 12 percent.



- Fear of reprisal by fellow employees, bosses, or the community traditionally keep many women from speaking out about their experiences. This [concern](#), combined with Twitter’s character [limit](#), inspired some women to participate in the conversation via personal [blog](#) posts rather than more publically visible tweets.
- Of course, gender issues in the gaming industry are not [new](#) concerns. Earlier this year, games journalist Leigh Alexander [suggested](#) the community look past “symptoms” toward the culture of gaming that facilitates these behaviors and perspectives. Academics have been doing [this](#) for over a [decade](#).
- Some [criticism](#) suggests sexism is only one of several reasons the games industry is not more diverse, arguing the sector’s particular pressures—like precarity—disproportionately affect all marginalized workers. The upcoming book [Gaming Globally](#) examines many of these pressures on an international

level.



- Two other hashtags were created in response to #1reasonwhy. The [first](#) (#1reasontobe) encouraged women to offer reasons why working in the games industry is rewarding. The [second](#) (#1reasonMentor) encouraged women to volunteer as “mentors.” Both conversations targeted aspiring female game makers and hoped to offset reservations about working in the industry.
- [Women in Games International](#) (WIGI) tackles these exact issues in the gaming industry. WIGI promotes gender equality, a better work/life balance, and healthy working conditions for games industry employees. In addition, the organization actively works towards increased opportunities and resources to ensure success and career support for nascent games workers, primarily but not limited to women. They also have an established mentoring program called [GameMentorOnline](#).