Ghostly Lines: The Need for More Accessibility

In chapters one and two of Tristan Donovan’s book *Replay: The History of Video Games*, the background and developmental history behind a handful of the world’s earliest, most revolutionary video games are discussed in detail. Created by scientist William Higinbotham in 1959, *Tennis for Two* was originally shown off to the public twice at Brookhaven National Laboratory and became a popular phenomenon among crowds – especially high schoolers (Donovan 8-9).

The gameplay for *Tennis for Two* was technically quite simple. On page nine of Donovan’s text, he describes it as a “side-on view of a tennis court with a net in the middle and thin ghostly lines that represented the players’ racquets.” The game was displayed on a round-shaped screen and a separate control was used to move the racquets with a dial and whack the ball with a button (Donovan 9).

Considered a Class I video game system (Miller 1), this game would have been difficult in certain ways for people with disabilities. For example, the flickering screen, rapid motion of the digitalized ball, and glowing imagery could potentially be problematic for people with various vision issues. If the player had disabilities related to their hands or fingers, holding and/or using the controller could also prove to be difficult.

Thankfully, our technological world is making strides towards making video games more accessible to people with various disabilities, thanks to organizations such as AbleGamers who believe that there are “no barriers to fun” (Spohn 1).

Works Cited

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