Expectations denied: Industry-audience conflict around the localisation of the Japanese video game ‘Yakuza 3’

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Craig Norris is a lecturer in Journalism, Media and Communications at the University of Tasmania. His paper examines the conflicting expectations between industry and fan around the localisation of the Japanese video game ‘Yakuza 3’ into the Western market in 2010. To answer the question of why this localisation disappointed so many fans, this paper focuses on the three central identities adopted by fans online: those who identified with the ‘Yakuza’ video games’ motifs, those who defined themselves through specific video game practices, and those who framed their disappointment in terms of broader new media practices. This paper examines these identities in terms of the broader struggles by industry and consumer to deal with an increasingly integrated global media market which needs to be understood not only in terms of financial flows, but also in terms of the emotional investments of audiences in branded, world-building media franchises.

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