



Dichotomous Indulgence and Resistance: Analyzing Female Players' Response to *Love and Deepspace*'s 3.0 Update. POLIS: Journal of Society and Culture, Vol. 2, Issue 1, 2026. © Mekeil Wilson.

Dichotomous Indulgence and Resistance: Analyzing Female Players' Response to *Love and Deepspace*'s 3.0 Update

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Abstract

Love and Deepspace is an immersive gacha Otome game, a genre focused on story-driven romance games marketed to women. On January 22, 2025, *Love and Deepspace* unveiled its 3.0 update live on YouTube, including an in-game period tracker. This feature allows users to input their menstrual cycles, prompting their chosen husbando (love interest) to respond with personalized care like stomach massages and comforting dialogue (*Love and Deepspace*, 35:30). This update comes amid rising concerns over data privacy and bodily autonomy, especially in light of anti-abortion laws in the U.S. and growing backlash against period tracker apps. As many women delete these apps in protest, the warm reception to *Love and Deepspace*'s tracker introduces an intriguing contrast. Using the frameworks of period tracking apps/feature as sites of biopolitical negotiations and Zuboff's (2019) &

Gidaris (2019) concept of surveillance capitalism, this research explores the fandom's seemingly dichotomous decisions of indulgence and resistance through the examination of fan connection, discourses, and practices through social media fan communities on TikTok and Reddit. The results reveal how fans engage in curating narratives of protection to rationalize their indulgence but also attempt to use the period tracking feature to negotiate resistance against US surveillance and other period tracking apps. This article asserts that despite the seemingly contradictory stances, the fandom's prior active mobilization and apparent concern presents intriguing potential for resistance against the threats of surveillance capitalism and biopolitical negotiation that the game itself poses.

Keywords: *Love and Deepspace*, data privacy, bodily autonomy, menstrual cycles, biopolitical negotiation, surveillance capitalism

As you step into the shoes of the main character (MC), you notice that something has indeed gone wrong. This is not the world you know. Usually, you are a fierce deepspace hunter who fights to rid your futuristic city, Linkon, of Wanderers, an invasive alien race that threatens the world. Now the world you knew is disregarded, in this alternate story where the world is in ruins, a mysterious phenomenon occurs that breaks down the psyche of people turning them into feral praedators. As the MC in this post apocalyptic world, you must solve the mysteries that will release the world from the danger of praedators. These 'praedators' were known—loved even—by you in another

universe, yet in this one you must interrogate them, get them to trust you with their secret, and then you must tame them. Only then can you save this world from the spread of this insanity.

You are forced to confront one praedator of your choice, Sylus, who is caged in an iron structure akin to a large bird cage with one hand cuffed to the bars overhead. You pick up a pair of handcuffs and step into the cage facing a feral Sylus, scantily clad in a tight leather harness that displays his lean and muscular chest and abs. He lunges at you, aiming for your neck before you step back. His deep voice taunts you to act quickly. He is tied up, yet his usual confidence and haughty demeanor remain as he snipes at you. He lunges for you again and you grab his free hand and handcuff it to the cage. The power you hold over him is palpable. Sylus, the figure of authority, now answers to you. You feel the unexpected weight of the situation, and as you execute the MC's actions, a strange thrill tinges your own response.

You follow the instructions on the screen, dragging your thumb to examine his body, the perspective shifts as you circle his lean torso, watching his abs contract with each deep breath. You scan his body to detect the activator needed to 'tame' him. In this series of touches to his waist you detect the activator on his body. You trace your hands slowly over Sylus's upper body, the tension building as you wonder, "Is the activator here?" Sylus' breaths become laborious as your hand wanders, sensuous moans between his words as he says "that feels... good." The intensity of the moment makes you hesitate for a split second, which is all he needs to escape from his confines and pull you into an embrace as he whispers in your ear. Your heart races, but you break free and when he lunges for you

again, you push the activator located in his right eye. As his wild nature recedes his embrace now feels like a triumph, not just for the MC, but for you, the player steering her actions.

As you read the scene unfold, a thought must run through your mind, mirroring the reaction of a streamer's: "What is this? What did I stumble on to?" It is a moment from *Love and Deepspace's* Tomorrow's Catch-22 event, an event that has circulated widely on social media. Similarly, intimate scenes have been used in the game's promotional ads fostering a community of female players who through the game are able to engage in themes of control, vulnerability, and fantasy in ways that feel both provocative and empowering.

Introduction

Love and Deepspace is an immersive gacha Otome game, a genre focused on story-driven romance games aimed at women, where the player takes on the role of a female protagonist (Wikipedia). Gacha elements encourage players to spend in-game or real currency for rewards (Wikipedia). Set in a futuristic sci-fi world, the game follows the main character (MC), a deepspace hunter who combats alien Wanderers with the help of her chosen husbando (love interest). With rich lore, detailed graphics, and intimate first-person moments, *Love and Deepspace* offers an addictive experience featuring combat, five distinct love interests, and a mystery surrounding the MC's backstory meant to cater to its target audience: women. On January 22, 2025, *Love and Deepspace* unveiled its 3.0 update live on YouTube, exciting fans with new features including an in-game menstruation tracker. This is an extension to the game's "Remind Me" feature that allows users to input their periods,

prompting their chosen husbando to respond with personalized care like stomach massages and dialogue aimed at easing discomfort (*Love and Deepspace*, 35:30; Diaz, 2025). During the displays of these interactions, the live chat was a constant stream of messages—a chorus of ‘That’s so cute’, and ‘That’s cool’—all sharing positive feedback from its users. Meanwhile, viewers also referenced distrust of other menstruation tracking apps, particularly Flo, which is currently facing a Canadian class action lawsuit for sharing sensitive health data.

This update comes after the June 2022 overturning of *Roe v. Wade* which returned to state authority the right to regulate abortion, resulting in many state criminalizations. This update also comes after the Canadian class action lawsuit against Flo, which bolstered concerns of data privacy and bodily autonomy (Duguay et al., 2024). As many women delete menstruation tracking apps in protest, the warm reception to *Love and Deepspace’s* tracker produces an intriguing contrast (Duguay et al., 2024). I argue that through the production of defense narratives, fans negotiate their dichotomous desire for indulgence and need for resistance. Female players undergo the seemingly contradictory task of attempting to minimize concerns of harm while maintaining their opposition to US and Canada’s biopolitical surveillance and potential data misuse. Additionally, I argue that the biopolitical inclination of players in conjunction with broader fan practices such as fervent mobilization and boycotts signals a potential for active resistance against Infold and its parent company, PaperGames if the perceived ‘safety’ of the game, pertaining to data privacy and misuse, is disrupted. This is especially pertinent if the professed trust between players and the company is breached in service to the U.S./Canada state or corporations like Meta Platforms, Google etc. Overall, *Love and Deepspace*

presents an intriguing case study into the intersection of women's reproductive rights and data privacy and its pervasive extensions into everyday life.

Methodology

To collect data for this study, I employed several qualitative methods including media analysis of *Love and Deepspace* and the player's community primarily through TikTok, given the platform's influential and active fan community on the application. However, other social media platforms such as Reddit and Twitch were utilized. Additionally, participant observation of gameplay on TikTok and Twitch was transformed into fieldnotes from quick jottings, and two semi-structured, transcribed interviews with players of the game. Lastly, my personal experience of playing the game for approximately two months also contributed to the information used to build this paper.

Interviews were conducted in two formats: one online via Zoom and the other in person, each lasting approximately one hour. Given the nature of the study, a casual, conversational approach was adopted to encourage openness and authentic responses. To maintain anonymity, the interviewees are referred to as "Jane" and "Doe." The data and media analysis collected focused on recurring and conflicting themes regarding players' emotional connection to the game, community belonging, and perceptions of the period feature in the game's 3.0 update. Additionally, literature research was undertaken to provide context on Otome games, as well as the broader issues surrounding data privacy and the protection of women's sensitive health information.

Findings: Community Belonging

Doe, a Canadian participant, attributes the fan community especially on TikTok to be incredibly important to player engagement, noting that “usually, the communities draw me in first... and then I’ll go to the app.” She suggests that the fandom’s size and energy often attract new players, saying, “The noise of the fandom makes people interested.” The online fan community surrounding *Love and Deepspace* is generally described as “kind and respectful, most of the time,” and while X (formerly Twitter) is noted as a more contentious space, the community is largely perceived as a safe environment for women. One participant notes, “I don’t see a lot of personal attacks or threats... it’s mostly people engaging positively or neutrally over the series.” Another participant, Doe, emphasizes that the community fosters self-appreciation and love for womanhood: “It’s a very ‘appreciate yourself’ kind of environment, like love your womanhood.” In this way, the space has been constructed by participants as an empowering space for women. The community’s practices of sharing, helping, and mutual enthusiasm contribute to a sense of safety and connection. As Jane states, “there’s a lot of sharing and helping, and people are just excited to talk about how good something is.”

Emotional Connection & Empowerment

Jane and Doe demonstrate contrasting approaches to engaging with *Love and Deepspace*. Jane, who works from home, incorporates the game into her daily routine, stating she always “has it running.” The interview was not an exception to this, as Caleb, one of the husbandos, was working next to her on her second screen. She plays daily for at least two hours, stating, “I guess I really like seeing the characters, it’s funny. I like seeing Caleb, I like [him] being there, and so even if it’s just for the study or work feature, I just like his virtual presence.” A key feature of the game is the ability to

interact with your husbandos outside of the in-game storyline. Doe adds, “The male love interests always appearing on your screen once you open the game... creates an emotional bond. [It] makes you become familiar with them.” These recurring interactions help deepen their familiarity and attachment to the characters.

In contrast, Doe, who describes herself as ‘moderately’ invested in the characters, primarily engages with the main story and the mystery of the MC’s backstory. She logs in daily for 15-30 minutes to collect rewards, playing more extensively only when time permits. The login reward instills an aspect of discipline that encourages Doe, despite her casual status to engage with the game daily (Gidaris, 2019). Doe highlights the MC’s storyline as her main investment. Doe values the MC’s goal-oriented character and the focus on her personal journey: “I’m mostly invested in the main story because the way that they wrote the main character is really nice. I didn’t expect them to write her with such a goal oriented mindset.” Doe highlights how the MC’s agency and independence differs from the typical characterization of women in the Otome genre: “...in *Love and Deepspace*, you’re not using all your emotional energy on, like, fixing like their [the husbandos] trauma. You’re trying to get to the bottom of your story and they’re there along the way. You navigate your own lives together and I like that.”

The MC’s characterization is a key reason why women not only connect with the game but feel empowered by it. As Jane states: “I do think that her boldness is having, like, a positive, reaction in players. I’ve heard from people within the community who’ve stated that they’ve been sort of inspired by the MC and their interaction with romance and initiating aspects of intimacy.” Similarly, Doe views

the MC to be less of a self-insert, stating that while the MC is more “confident”, she is “a little bit more timid” and the MC is more of a “role model” than a reflection of herself. In these cases, women don’t feel connected/represented but empowered by the MC to be more agentic actors in their own lives. Women are able to navigate romantic/sexual themes through a character that is as bold, confident, goal-oriented and independent with romantic/sexual relations as she is with protecting Linkon City from Wanderers.

Overall, the fan community surrounding *Love and Deepspace* is described as “deeply passionate about their favourite guys,” with ongoing conversations about preferred characters and their integration into everyday life. Fieldwork observations reveal that this emotional investment is not limited to the main story but extends to the game’s broader elements as corroborated by both participant’s interest in the mini-games and combat. The community’s intense connection to the game is attributed to both the narratives of romance, sexuality, and agency as well as the mechanisms of the game itself.

Period Tracker Reactions

The overwhelmingly positive reactions to the inclusion of a menstruation tracker in the 3.0 update of *Love and Deepspace*, as observed in the YouTube livestream’s comment section, were also reflected in the perspectives of the interviewees. Jane, an American player, initially expressed hesitance due to living in a “post-Roe v. Wade world.” However, she came to view the tracker as a natural extension of the game’s previous engagement with periods. She stated:

One of the audios that [Sylus] does is [where] MC is on her period, and he takes care of her. ...This game has already kind of brought the idea of normalizing periods and integrat[ed] [it] into the characters [and] the game. So I guess this is a natural progression, especially along with it having reminders.

Doe, a Canadian player, expressed her positive reaction to the inclusion of period tracker, discussing how, in her cultural context, menstruation is not openly acknowledged:

I really like the implementation of this feature because as a woman who grew up in, [and] around Asian culture, periods aren't something that you ever talk about, except with your mom when you finally have it. And then you never mention it again. I've never heard my brothers talk about it at all... It's just something you learn through osmosis, [by] being around women. I really appreciate them taking the step to make it more normal for you to want your partner -fictional or not- to be in tune with ... your health because it's really important.

For Doe, the inclusion of the period tracker was significant due to the cultural absence of menstrual discourse. She particularly appreciated how the feature depicted male characters as knowledgeable about menstruation and considerate towards women's experiences. Both interviewees state that the game empowers women to ask their partners to learn more and be more involved with their health. According to Doe, the game has a normalized menstrual discourse, which, as observed by Jane, has already taken effect.

I have heard some good stories from people who are in relationships saying that their boyfriends have played the game and have learned. Or that they themselves have shown them certain things and have opened up those conversations to their boyfriend or spouse. And I think that it's nice; [the period tracker] could be a positive influence on things.

As time passed, the inclusion of the period tracker gained increased appreciation among players, enhancing their sense of being catered to. Jane theorized that this progression was largely due to the feature's thoughtful execution: "I'm sure a lot of other people didn't expect it to be so robust, in terms of the conversations that were within the game. [For example] Zayne [is] speaking like a doctor, but still being very comforting... So, yeah, it helps women feel, like, really catered to."

This perspective is shared among feminist Chinese Otome gamers where one participant stated that, besides fulfilling women's emotional needs that are unmet in patriarchal societies, Otome games are also instrumentalized to experiment with non-normative lifestyles and envision women's non-reproductive futures" (Liu et al., 2024, p. 13). The husbando's focus on the player's health, emotions, and well-being essentially distances menstruation from reproductive governance and biopolitical threat/negotiation, a feat not available with the use of dedicated period tracking apps. The community's actions might seem contradictory given their awareness of sociopolitical dangers, however, these choices to platform also reflect the "minimal but nonetheless legitimate form of protest" ... in women's everyday lives" (Liu et al., 2024, p. 11).

Data and Privacy Concerns

In spaces of fervent fan activity, such as TikTok, the period tracker feature in *Love and Deepspace* does not appear to occupy a particularly controversial space within game discourse. In broader conversations about the game, privacy and data concerns regarding the menstruation tracker are rarely discussed in depth. As one interviewee observed: “I think people are mostly focused on the reaction from the character with the, with the period tracker ‘cuz like I haven’t seen any concerns about the data sharing...”

However, concerns regarding data privacy are not entirely absent. These concerns tend to emerge more frequently in spaces like Reddit, where players, particularly those in the United States, initiate discussions about potential risks. One user, in response to a query asking for reactions to the new update, expressed the following: “I don’t want to share any personal medical information with an Otome game for them to on-sell to market researchers.” Though the concerns are rare, some users across forums state their refusal to use the period tracker, with an even smaller minority describing it as “sick” or “gross” (u/MathematicianKey8235, 2025). Doe, reflecting on this issue, commented: “A lot of people think, ‘oh, the data I put on this app isn’t gonna harm me. It’s not taking anything deeply personal.’ Despite women’s health being a deeply personal thing that they shouldn’t be selling, I do think a lot of people would brush it off like it’s not a big deal.”

This view aligns with the predominant perspective in Reddit discussions where many players dismiss the possibility that the American government would use *Love and Deepspace* as a source of data about women’s menstrual cycles, considering such concerns to be “fearmongering” (u/Otome_Chick,

2025). Several rationales are typically provided to defend the feature's inclusion in the game. Firstly, many fans believe the company would not risk betraying fan trust and loyalty. This perspective is shared by Doe, who, prior to the interview, had not considered the potential risks of Infold's access to this data. However, after reflecting on the matter, she stated: "I can't see them doing anything to directly harm the people that they're making a game for because a lot of the games are catered towards women, so it'd be surprising to me for them to directly contribute to any harm."

Many fans share this perspective, stating on forums that Infold would be unlikely to participate in data sharing or selling due to the risk of losing their primarily female audience. Fans claim the company has no incentive to do this as *Love and Deepspace*, being a gacha game, already has numerous monetization strategies that are highly profitable. They believe that the menstruation tracker is a simple reminder function that collects unverified information which would not be valuable enough to justify the sharing or selling of data (u/TheCrazyOutcast, 2025). Regardless of the apparent risk, this discourse reveals an undercurrent of constructed trust between the company and the players. The company is received positively by fans as one that would not cause harm to their fanbase.

Another argument put forth is that because Infold Games is of Chinese origin, the U.S. government could not easily demand or request user data, particularly given the worsening political tensions between the two countries. Fans believe that the company's nationality offers a safeguard. One Reddit user summarized this point by stating: "It's just really weird and funny that, right now, if you want to track your periods, the app with the lowest possibility and least amount of incentive to sell you out is a Chinese Otome gacha game" (u/Daiontearose, 2025).

With this logic, corporate data ownership is encoded as inevitable and there is deep rooted in distrust and disapproval of U.S.'s reproductive governance and biopolitical surveillance. This logic is described by Westerlund (2021) as bi-directional distrust, where he notes that "public trust in government has declined in developed countries dramatically over recent decades, while surveillance has not decreased, but rather increased" (p. 36). A pervading connotation in this discourse however is the assumption that American and Chinese corporations are distinct and opposing in the realm of digital data. Under this logic, they engage in the use of the period tracker feature as an act of resistance against one surveillance state (the U.S.) over another (China). Players attempt to creatively weaponize this dichotomy as using the app to track one's menstruation is positioned as a way to undermine the digital surveillance and biopolitical regulations of the American state. Thus, players' distrust in the U.S. government and concerns of data privacy with other menstruation tracking apps actually encodes the game's feature as a 'safer' alternative.

A recurring point among players is that the data collected by the menstruation tracker is not verified, allowing users to input whatever information they wish, thus reducing the potential for misuse. Overall, Jane, the American player, shares the sentiment that while there may be risks, these are not perceived as significant enough to deter her use of the feature. She explained:

You know, again, there is the risk, and it's real. I acknowledge it and anyone who doesn't wanna use it for those reasons is smart. Maybe there's a bit of pessimism there. Maybe there's a bit of feeling like my information is being taken all the time. And this is one little thing that brings

me joy. So I'm like, 'you know what? Let's give it a go.' Will I use it [the] next time I'm on my period? Probably.

Discussion

A review of *Love and Deepspace's* Privacy Policy reveals the company's practices regarding the collection and use of player data. Specifically, the policy outlines how the game collects information when users opt to use the "Remind Me" feature, which includes the Period Tracker. It states:

If you choose to use the 'Remind Me' feature in-game, you provide us with the information you enter/edit while using this feature. [For example...] when using the 'Period' feature, you provide us with the date and cycle you input. We will access your system date and time, and invoke your notification permissions to realize the reminder feature in the 'Remind Me' feature in-game. The aforementioned data you provide is solely for the purpose of recording/setting reminders when using this feature, and we will not verify/validate the authenticity or completeness of the aforementioned information, nor will we use the aforementioned data for any other purpose or share it with any third party. The data you provide to us through the use of this feature is completely at your discretion, and we advise you not to use this feature to record sensitive personal data or data related to your privacy/property security. If you refuse to provide the aforementioned data, you will be unable to use the 'Remind Me' feature, but this will not affect your normal use of other features in *Love and Deepspace*.

Though the policy claims to protect user data, it is important to note that despite a similarly robust Privacy Policy, Flo is currently under a class action lawsuit in Canada for violating user privacy

agreements. They allegedly share sensitive health data with third parties like Google and Facebook (Kaur, 2025). Thus, while *Love and Deepspace's* Privacy Policy states that it does not share its menstruation feature's data with third parties, precedent suggests that such risks should not be dismissed outright.

A recurring point among players is that the data collected by the menstruation tracker is not verified, allowing users to input falsified information, thus reducing the potential for government misuse. The surveillance capabilities of companies are severely underestimated as this narrative assumes that there is no method to make this data verifiable. In fact, no evidence showcases that anonymizing this data is “meaningfully achievable” (Zuboff, 2019, p. 158). This exemplifies the high level of surveillance reflexively embedded in devices and applications, with little concern for the attainability of anonymity and privacy that many companies promise its users. While the option to input false information into the period is viewed as a “smart” decision and some users do abstain, it seems that the majority of players who chose to use the period feature have inputted their menstrual cycle data, regardless of whether or not they continuously use or depend on the feature. Doe, for example, doesn't use the period feature often, however, she has used the period tracker before and chose to input accurate information. Many claim in Reddit forums that they prefer to use the period feature as a replacement to period-tracking apps like Flo. Though, according to the policy, the unverifiable narrative holds some truth, as when using the period feature it does ask users to verify if the reminders

of your menstruation's beginning and end are correct. Another significant note is Infold's advice to players not to use the feature to record "sensitive personal data." This warning is contradictory to their advertising of the feature and the actual use of players.

Many players believe the company would not risk the sharing or selling of sensitive health data. Many dismiss the claims as "fearmongering," but is it? Surveillance capitalism refers to the way in which data collection has become an increasingly powerful commodity that allows users to engage in apps for free (Gidaris, 2019). According to Gidaris, surveillance capitalism operates "by abstracting human bodies into data flows that can be exchanged, purchased, and sold in the digital economy, these companies look to the body as a digital site, one whose value is predicated entirely on its capacity to yield profitable information." (Gidaris, 2019, p. 137). Menstrual tracking applications operate in the space of surveillance capitalism as sites of biopolitical negotiation; where the "the politics of life itself" are managed by the state-corporations using digital surveillance and data collection (Rose, 2017, p. 15). In this context of menstruation apps as a site of biopolitical negotiation, ownership, and collection of women's menstrual health records can be understood as an especially profitable commodity. The economic orientation of data, however, is a trojan horse often disguised behind a web of digital spheres (Zuboff, 2019).

Love and Deepspace's profitable gacha inclusions does not deny the incentives of the sale of women's health data especially given the lack of legal protections in Canada and the US from non-medically administrated health devices and apps (Gidaris, 2019). Thus, the constructed defense narrative of 'risk' is more bound within players' trust in Infold rather than the presence of preventative

measures such as legal consequences or lack of incentives. User faith is thus a part of Infold's competitive edge that enables them to bypass the criticism that period tracking apps face. The responsibility is placed on the company to stay honourable to this trust despite the opportunity to maximize profits. This necessitates users to be active labourers in managing the safety of their data in the absence of governing bodies and regulations. Users must consistently demand transparency and adherence to the privacy policy of the company. Thus, health and data privacy becomes a neoliberal project where, due to government mistrust and state deregulation, citizens must manage and control their health through the use of non-medical apps (Gidaris, 2019). Users are also forced to navigate the complex, interconnected and mystified ecosystem of data to advocate for data security with companies. As Dijck (2014) aptly states "what is at stake here is not simply our "trust" in specific government agencies or single corporations, but the credibility of the entire ecosystem" (p. 204). The 'ecosystem of data' not only refers to the digital sphere but the underlying operational logic that enables data ownership, deregulation, and surveillance capitalism to be in service of state or company profit.

The community deploys a theory that the company's nationality offers a safeguard, however, further investigation into the Privacy Policy showcases the exemptions to their policies which debase the belief that nationality is a safeguard against government data appropriation. Firstly, Infold Games is a Singaporean company, however its parent company, PaperGames, is Chinese. A pervading assumption in this rationale is the segregation between China/Singapore and US's data spheres but also a separation between corporations and state. However, data and digital identity is mystified

through an interconnected, global web of connections. Data is stored across privately owned corporations and transferred through global partnerships impossible to track (Dijck, 2014; Varoufakis, 2023). In this way, data is a mysterious global ecosystem “where no single institution is in command but which credibility is disputed in a number of public debates, court struggles, and political skirmishes” (Dijck, 2014, p. 204). This is exemplified by Infold’s global operations, as the game and parent company both have servers storing user data in several locations across the globe including in the U.S. Additionally, this rationale positions that due to geopolitical tensions between China and the U.S., data collected would not be made available to the U.S. even if requested, even though the policy states: “We may collect and use certain personal data without your authorization and consent in compliance with the relevant laws, regulations, and national standards in the country where you use our services, as well as to meet the request of judicial authorities and law enforcement agencies.” (Infold Games, 2024)

The clause above states that at the request of local authorities player data can be used without consent. The policy further notes that personal information may be processed on servers located in various regions, including Virginia, USA. Reiterating that while state-corporation relations are impacted by geopolitical tensions, they have developed and sustained connections beyond them. Legal experts have expressed concerns about the potential use of digital data trails such as those created by period tracking apps to incriminate individuals suspected of obtaining illegal abortions (Kelly & Habib, 2022). Although it is unclear whether the data collected by *Love and Deepspace* would be

substantive enough to pose a risk in such cases, the potential for governmental requests to access this data remains a significant issue for American players.

While some players dismiss such privacy concerns as “fearmongering,” it is worth noting that even under the assumption that Infold Games is committed to safeguarding user data, the risk remains present. As the Privacy Policy itself acknowledges:

“You understand that, due to technical limitations and various malicious means that may exist, we cannot guarantee 100% security of your data, even if we have done our utmost to intensify our security measures” (Infold Games 2024).

Such disclaimers expose the inherent uncertainties of data security, particularly for users who may be unaware of the full scope of the risks involved. Yet, irrespective of risk awareness, many players have already signed “I agree” to accept these risks. Despite this, it’s important to note that the game does not penalize or pressure players into inputting this information; it’s an aspect that one can simply choose not to engage in. Furthermore, this aspect of the game is not heavily advertised or pushed in *Love and Deepspace* advertisements. However, more should be done to showcase this advisory and to inform players of their right to delete previously inputted/stored information regarding the tracker. This lack of proaction might be attributed to the relative lack of concern regarding the feature’s invasive potential. Thus, data privacy practices of *Love and Deepspace* should be critically examined and continuously monitored to ensure that players are fully informed of the potential risks.

Dichotomous Indulgence and Resistance

The game's explosive popularity within North America is not coincidental but is rather intertwined with women's dissatisfaction with broader sociopolitical contexts, particularly the intensification of conservative political movements that heightened the vulnerability of women's reproductive health. *Love and Deepspace's* inclusion of the period feature and the unexpected 'robustness' of its emotional care departs from typical association of menstruation in relation to reproduction. This encodes *Love and Deepspace* as a rare space within the video game community where women are catered to and feel empowered to be more agentic actors in the assertion of their desires. The community's indulgence in the period feature is not a matter of ignorance. Though the Canadian participant did not previously consider the risk, her knowledge did not change her view of the company or the feature. She maintains that the company in its acknowledgement of periods has gained more of her 'respect' as it normalizes menstruation as an important topic of conversation with partners and family. Jane, the American participant, as well as other American players in Reddit forums showcase an awareness of the risk of data privacy and deep distrust in the U.S. government yet she—and many commenters—shared that she would still continue to use the feature. Both Doe and Jane's perspectives imply that the positives—such as empowering women to talk about their periods—outweighs the risks.

The construction of defense discourses showcases an effort to navigate these risks while maintaining their connection to the game. However, *Love and Deepspace* players also actively mobilize acts of resistance against the game. The 2025 fan boycott of *Love and Deepspace* was initiated by the Chinese fanbase, but participation spread through social media to international fanbases. The boycott

was organized around fan outrage at a myriad of complaints including raised gacha prices that were allegedly “trying to milk the fans for more money instead of giving, like, free opportunities to get cards and more of [Sylus’s] story.” There were even threats of lawsuit against the games’ parent company, PaperGames, for alleged false advertising. Both Jane and Doe were aware of the boycott despite their different levels of involvement. Jane, the avid player, participated while Doe, who states she usually only logs in for free rewards, did not. On the boycott, Jane reports:

It was less than a week, maybe like 4-5 days, so it wasn’t too bad... There was a heads up on the boycott... that gave international fans some time to prepare and to know what to do. [But] there was a lot of confusion around it. Are we not logging in at all? Are we logging in to get, like, the free gifts? Are we just not spending money? Or are we using our pre-existing diamonds? I just did not touch it at all. Because I know that they keep track of the engagement... that they could always use probably for investors.

While both participants stated they weren’t sure about the outcome of the boycott, it is remarkable that fans were able to organize their resistance across language barriers and differing social platforms as seen by the mobilization of avid players like Jane and the targeting of corporate milestones such as investments and shareholder value. Additionally, the in-game survey enables fans to actively and routinely report their thoughts on very specific details of the game. In this way, players impact the game’s mechanisms and inclusions showcasing the fans’ willingness to resist against the game itself.

This mobilization around outrage is what is needed to resist against companies in the wake of surveillance capitalism and the threat of state-corporate weaponization of period trackers as sites of biopolitical negotiation (Zuboff, 2019). Given the fan community's inclination to mobilize against the company's allegedly brazen monetary extraction and false advertising, it is the hope that a similar level of—or more—mobilization would occur in the case, it is revealed that the company engages in sharing or selling their health data.

Conclusion

Love and Deepspace provides a unique space for women where they can explore their desires, engage with characters who validate their experiences, and assert their agency in the face of a male-dominated gaming space. In my analysis of the TikTok fan community and interviews, I showcase how *Love and Deepspace* uses game mechanics and features such as “Remind Me,” and daily login rewards to embed itself in players' daily lives. This was corroborated by the interviewees, Jane and Doe, who despite differing player status, casual versus dedicated, both play the game daily. This daily embeddedness builds a strong connection accelerated by the game's innovative ways of catering to and empowering its female fanbase. While more interviews are needed to form conclusive claims, from my results, both interviewees assert the characterization of the MC and the inclusion of the menstruation tracker as examples of the many intricate ways the game empowers women by inspiring them to be more agentic and assertive of their desires and expectations, especially pertaining to romantic and sexual partnerships.

In response to concerns of data privacy and reproductive governance in the U.S. and Canada, many fans actively construct or reproduce rationales of protection in order to preserve their indulgence in the game. The period tracker is constructed as a radical inclusion within the fan community, one that allows menstruation distanced from regulation and reproduction, centers women's care and pleasure thus empowering them to assert their needs in intimate relationships and is "outside" of U.S. government reach due to its plausible deniability and Chinese origins. The inevitability of data ownership, collection, and sharing is a recurring logic undercutting these rationales instead the probability of harm is what is often debated. While Infold's Privacy Policy attempts to assure the protection of user data, precedent showcases the fragility of such policies and the lack of preventative measures. The mystification of digital databases aids this deregulation, as users are enlisted to be active, consistent, and mobile in ensuring companies are transparent and compliant to the policies they set. Players have become the regulatory body for companies and their trust must become the 'risk' that companies dare not to breach. However, what is at stake is certainly more than trust, as some users face the weaponization of digital surveillance in the biopolitical management of women's reproduction which the criminalization of abortion across multiple U.S. states emphasizes. Canadian users who seem less actively involved in data concern discourses, also confront danger at the probability of Infold sharing/selling data to third parties seeking to market/influence/modify human behaviour (Varoufakis, 2023; Zuboff, 2019).

Indeed, what is truly at stake is the very essence of human agency and sovereignty. According to Zuboff (2019), “surveillance capitalism [is married to] behavior modification and the technological means to automate its application” (p. 189). Data privacy in the grand scheme becomes a matter of resistance in order to assert one’s agency and sovereignty of one’s life and behaviour. There needs to be a “rebirth of astonishment and outrage” not only at the prospect of data commodification but at the very prospect of naturalized state-corporate ownership of digital data and identity (Zuboff 2019; Varoufakis 2023). Though players’ choice to share sensitive health information given awareness of current sociopolitical tensions does pose substantive risks, the positive reception of the feature within *Love and Deepspace’s* fan community could be contextualized within larger cultural and political contexts in which women’s enjoyment and self-care is recognized as acts of resistance (Liu et al 2024). However, *Love and Deepspace* players engage in resistance beyond indulgence as showcased by their prior boycott against Infoland and their attempts to negotiate resistance against the biopolitical surveillance of the U.S. and Canada using the *Love and Deepspace* menstrualtracker feature. The results showcase the complex dynamics of indulgence and resistance players must navigate to both enjoy and mitigate risks. Overall, current fan discourses and practices point to a possibility in which users are willing to mobilize in demand for transparency, the right to data security, and privacy.

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