have accomplished alone. And the third source of power is the citizen-scientist movement characterized by the desire of ordinary individuals to contribute to scientific knowledge.

In all, the book provides thoughtful analysis of knowledge games. It asks and examines what constitutes a knowledge game in the first place (this is a new enough domain to still lack consensus on what makes something a knowledge game)? It also explores the scientific knowledge that effective knowledge games build upon or should build upon. For example, there is a great deal of work on how commercial video games motivate players and what they offer that should be included in a knowledge game to produce maximum efficacy. The book also analyzes key questions that will increasingly arise as knowledge games become more common, such as the possibility that for-profit entities could use such games as a de facto source of free labor. And because these points are couched in terms of currently successful (or sometimes less successful) knowledge games, issues that might otherwise feel very abstract are made much more concrete.

The book may be a challenge for individuals who are not well versed in gaming, because it commonly makes allusions to popular commercial video games such as *Dragon Age: Inquisition, League of Legends, World of Warcraft, Bioshock,* and *Candy Crush.* And readers may be frustrated that the book seems, in some passages, to spend far more time posing questions than providing answers. Indeed, the rhetorical device of employing a long series of questions as a method to introduce or motivate concepts seems overused throughout the book, even if it reflects a particular honesty regarding the current state of the field. We simply find it not surprising that given how new knowledge games are as a concept, we scientists would have more questions than we do answers. And after all, the first step to finding interesting answers is asking the right questions.

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Moral Combat: Why the War on Violent Video Games Is Wrong
Patrick M. Markey and Christopher Ferguson
Dallas, TX: BenBella Books, Inc., 2017, Notes and index. 248 pp. $16.95 paper. ISBN: 9781942952985

The concept of moral panic is a fascinating and scintillating one for scholars, because it speaks to the unfortunate, albeit inextricable, interaction between society and social science. Scholarship generally intends to help us better understand the world around us, but we usually prefer scholarship aimed at risk identification and aversion. Such preferences grow even stronger in the face of salient social and cultural flashpoints—for example, the sudden shift in funding towards auto-immunodeficiency (AIDS) research after the disease was contracted by American teenager Ryan White, one of the first nonhomosexuals to die from the disease in the 1980s, or the September 11 terrorist attacks, which led to a focus on identifying and stopping terrorist threats. Indeed, in *Moral Combat,*

media psychologists Patrick Markey and Christopher Ferguson discuss the Columbine school shooting in April 1999 as a flashpoint for a marked refocusing of media research on the psychological and social ills of video games. Data provided in chapter 2 (or level 2, using the book's parlance) demonstrates a nearly five-fold increase in the number of scholarly publications on violent video games in 2001 in a self-labeled "post-Columbine era" that shows no signs of slowing.

In a remarkably smooth and fun read that blends anecdote and empirical data, Markey and Ferguson address the history of violent video games as a media product and as a focal point for academic, political, and social scorn. The manuscript is accessible to a wide variety of audiences, although this accessibility at times results in critical nuances being omitted from their discussions. Most notably, the authors summarize several research reports without discussing in any detail some of the theories and models of psychology and communication studies that informed and inspired (and perhaps even invalidated) these same reports.

The authors' grasp of the history of gaming and the moral panics around violent gaming is stellar, which is why I required my own researchers to read several chapters from this manuscript. In particular, Markey and Ferguson do a masterful job of interpreting and extending their moral panic cyclone (inspired by British sociologist David Gauntlett) on pages 39–47.

The larger field of play studies and game studies will likely find the manuscript's 310 citations impressive in quantity but myopic in relation to the wider body of literature. For example, they leave to the wayside the contributions of critical and cultural studies scholars to the discussion of violent games. Another example is their discussion about the significance of *Death Race* (level 1) to the video game violence debate, which might have benefited from earlier writings on the same subject by Carly Kocurek. In a 2012 article published in *Game Studies*, she argues that the controversy surrounding *Death Race* was the flashpoint for violent gaming concerns. Core writings on play by scholars such as Johan Huizinga's classic *Homo Ludens* are also missing, which might have buttressed the author's claims about gaming's role in individual, cultural, and social development. However, because the book more narrowly focuses on media psychology than on play and game studies, a narrow ontological and empirical focus can likely be forgiven or at least, considered with critical nuance.

The authors' overly narrow scope is compounded by their overfocus on what they label as "a rebellious group of younger, progame researchers," which in several places seems to read as more aggrandizing than essential to the book's core claims (p. 50). A particularly troubling element of this quote, the phrase "progame researchers" seems to work against many of the authors' claims regarding the problems of moral panics and research agendas. That is, the authors openly criticize those scholars who allow their foregone conclusions to dictate their research (p. 42) yet, their own normative labeling of a "progame rebellion" merely highlights the existence of a similar, but oppositional, group with predetermined opinions on the subject. At the same time, the contributions of these

Rebel Alliance members (to borrow Markey and Ferguson's invocation of a *Star Wars* metaphor) are framed in the service of the book's larger message—in particular, the discussions with Dmitri Williams (the founder of Ninja Metrics and an early pioneer of game studies) related to the very real threats made to his career for publishing work that was decidedly not antivideo games. The authors also cover a possible watershed moment for media scholars involving an increasingly infamous televised debate between Phillip Zimbardo and Andrew Przybylski. And, although it might appear to be a tangential celebration of their Rebel Alliance, the story is intricately woven into the book's larger message as a cogent and salient representation of the debate between an established (antigames) school of thought and an emerging (progames) movement. Video of the debate is also accessible online and should be required viewing for anyone with even a passing interest in game and play studies (see reference 84 in the book).

The manuscript's significance lies not so much in its claims—Markey and Ferguson's statements have been echoed by many—but in its delivery: it offers a remarkably candid, often sardonic, at times oversimple, but ultimately accessible and decidedly insightful look at the sausage making that is social science. Level 6 perhaps best exemplifies the core qualities of this book, because it provides a frank discussion of video game addiction that slices through hyperbole, dispelling the myth that "video games are like heroin" and instead focusing on the descriptive (rather than normative) symptomology offered by Mark Griffith (p. 143).

General audiences will be relieved (or perhaps, disappointed) to learn that video games do not have the direct, powerful, and universal effects so many claim for them. In fact, latter chapters demonstrate prosocial impacts related to mood management, socialization, and physical fitness. Games and play scholars will find a mirror of their own world, which may trigger honest and humble reflection about their very own scientific process. The authors deserve bonus points for the "Easter eggs" hidden throughout the volume and the discussion about the Entertainment Software Ratings Board and the politics and politicking behind it (not unlike those behind Frederic Wertham's crusade against comic books that ultimately lead to the Comics Code Authority in 1954). *Moral Combat* does not decide the debate surrounding the uses and effects of violent video games, but it adds a refreshing salvo into the discussion that should be required reading for anyone involved, regardless of experience or position.

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Mixed Realism: Videogames and the Violence of Fiction

Timothy J. Welsh
Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2016. Preface, introduction, acknowledgments, notes, and index. 206 pp. $26.00 paper. ISBN: 9780816696086

Do violent video games cause violence? Despite countless publications, legal battles, and media firestorms, the territory