



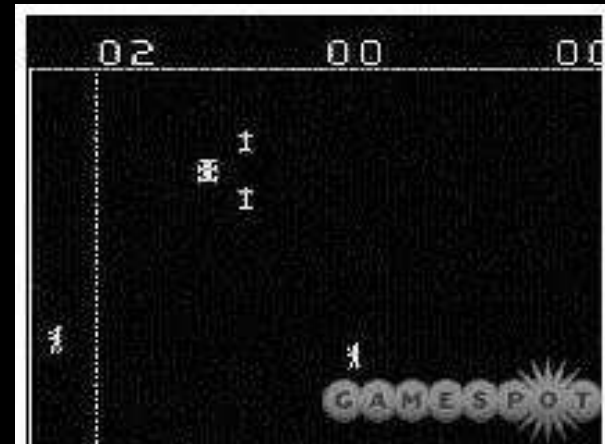
Violence and Video Games

Geoffrey Matthews

based on *Wikipedia* and *Gamespot* articles

Death Race, 1976

- Kill the “zombies”
- Exidy planned to sell 1,000
- Public outcry
- After controversy, sold 10,000
- I played it in Blacksburg



Night Trap, 1992

- Dorm room video cameras
- B-movie violence
- Kill the vampires
- Public outcry
- Game misunderstood



Mortal Combat, 1992

- Good game play
- Graphic violence
- Home computer version



1993 Senate Hearings

- Senators Lieberman and Kohl
- Video game industry presented 12 point program for self regulation
- ESRB born



Entertainment Software Rating Board

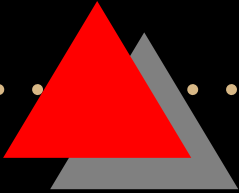
The ESRB is a non-profit, self-regulatory body established in 1994 that independently applies **ratings**, enforces **advertising guidelines**, and helps ensure responsible online **privacy** practices for the interactive entertainment software industry.





ESRB Content Descriptors

Alcohol Reference	Animated Blood	Blood
Blood and Gore	Cartoon Violence	Comic Mischief
Crude Humor	Drug Reference	Edutainment
Fantasy Violence	Informational	Intense Violence
Language	Lyrics	Mature Humor
Mild Violence	Nudity	Partial Nudity
Real Gambling	Sexual Themes	Sexual Violence
Simulated Gambling	Adult Assistance	Strong Language
Strong Lyrics	Strong Sexual Content	Suggestive Themes
Tobacco Reference	Use of Drugs	Use of Alcohol
Use of Tobacco	Violence	



1999: Columbine

- Harris and Klebold played *Doom* and *Wolfenstein 3D*
- 13 dead



2001: *Game addiction*

- 21-year-old committed suicide after playing *Everquest*





Legal Battles

- 2000: State of Missouri passes law regulating video games. ESA files lawsuit
- 2002: Judge Limbaugh reviews *Resident Evil*, *Mortal Kombat*, *Doom*, and *Fear Factor*: “This court reviewed four different video games and found no conveyance of ideas, expression, or anything else that could possibly amount to speech. The court finds that video games have more in common with board games and sports than they do with motion pictures.”
- Law upheld ...



Legal Battles

- 2003: 8th Circuit Court of Appeals in St. Louis overturns decision.
- “Whether we believe the advent of violent video games adds anything of value to society is irrelevant: guided by the first amendment, we are obliged to recognize that ‘they are as much entitled to the protection of free speech as the best of literature’.”

2003

- 18-year-old shot and killed three police officers
- Defense claimed he was inspired by *Grand Theft Auto III*



2003

- 13- and 16-year olds used rifles to fire at vehicles on the Interstate
- Killed a 45 year old man
- Claimed they were inspired by *Grand Theft Auto III*



Coquitlam, 2003

- 17 year old trounced 3 men in internet cafe in *Counterstrike*
- Men beat the boy, returned with gun, shot him



2004

- 41-year old stabbed to death 26-year old over a dispute involving a virtual weapon they had won in *Legend of Mir*



2005

- Four month old daughter of couple died after being left unattended for five hours while parents played *World of Warcraft* at internet cafe



2005

- 28-year old Korean died after playing *Starcraft* for 50 hours straight.
- Had recently been fired from his job for missing work to play video games.



2005: *GTA, San Andreas*

- “Hot Coffee” minigame unlocked
- Re-rated from **M** to **AO**
- Re-released without minigame
- Re-re-rated from **AO** to **M**



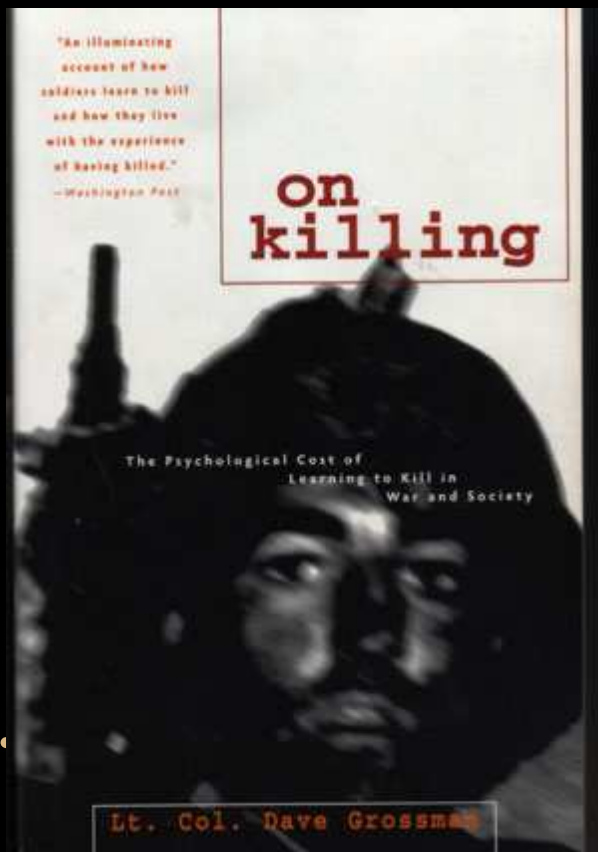
Family Entertainment Protection Act

- 2005: Clinton, Lieberman, Bayh
- Mandatory enforcement of ESRB ratings
- \$1000/\$5000 fine for selling **M** or **AO** to minor
- FTC supervision of ESRB
- Failed to pass



Conditioning to Kill

- Only 15-20% of soldiers killed in WWII
- 85-90% of soldiers killed in Vietnam

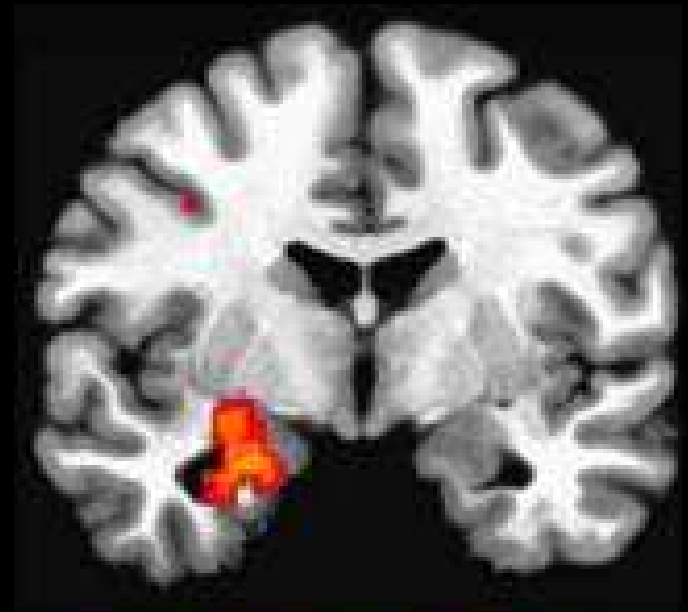


Brain Activation

Need for Speed: Underground \leftrightarrow *Medal of Honour: Frontline*



Non-violent game players



Violent game players



AMA and Video Game Addiction

- In 2007 AMA proposed calling excessive video-game playing a formal psychiatric addiction.
- After discussion decided against it.
- Recommended more study.
- On-Line Gamers Anonymous:
www.olganon.org



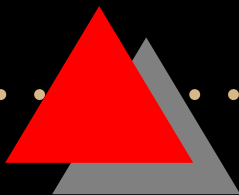
2007

- Chinese man dies after playing internet video games for three consecutive days in an Internet cafe.



2007, Ohio

- 16 year old buys *Halo 3* against the will of his parents.
- Father locks up game in a lockbox with his handgun.
- Child steals keys, takes gun and game, shoots both parents.
- Mother dies.
- Jury dismisses claims of video game addiction by defense.





2007, Russia

- Man beaten to death after his guild and a rival one in *Lineage II* challenged each other to a real life brawl.



2008, New York

- Four teens allegedly obsessed with *Grand Theft Auto IV* went on a crime spree, assaulting a man and stealing a woman's BMW.



2008, Thailand

- Teen stabs taxi driver to death to get money to buy *Grand Theft Auto IV*
- Thailand bans the game.



2008, Canada

- Teen runs away from home after parents confiscate his *Xbox 360*, for playing too much *Call of Duty 4*.
- Teen later found dead in the wilderness by local hunters.



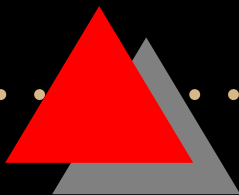
ESA Statistics, 2007

- US computer & video software sales \$9.5 billion, tripled since 1996
- 67% of American heads of households play
- The average player is 33 and has been playing for 12 years
- The average buyer is 38 years old.



ESA Statistics, 2007

- 92% computer game buyers and 80% console game buyers were over 18
- 85% all games were E or T or E10+
- 86% game players under 18 say they get parents' permission to buy
- 91% game players under 18 say parents are present when they buy





ESA Statistics, 2007

- 36% Americans parents say the play
- 80% gamer parents say they play with their kids
- 66% say it brought families closer together



ESA Statistics, 2007

- 38% of gamers are women
- 24% of Americans over 50 play
- 49% of gamers play online 1 hour a week or more
- 24% of heads of households play on cell's or PDA's



Cause and Effect?

- Probability of getting lung cancer:

Never smoked:	0.2%
Former smokers:	5.5%
Current smokers:	15.9%
Heavy smokers:	24.4%



Two views

Please read

- *Reality Bytes*, Henry Jenkins
- *Violent Video Games*, Craig A. Anderson