



Cyber Warriors, Kids, and Elves

I'm going to upload past newsletters to an archive page on my website. That way you'll be able to retrieve past newsletters, which are sometimes referenced in futures newsletters. I have created the archive folders but not yet the archive newsletters to put in them. I'll let you know when I have.

This issue relates to computer games, which I spoke about in previous newsletters. I present this information without exposition as it's self-explanatory. It comes from the most recent issues of [Games and Culture](#) that describes itself as "*international journal that promotes innovative theoretical and empirical research about games and culture within interactive media.*"

Unfortunately, you can't get the full text of these articles without subscription, so I'm presenting this material just to let you know what other people are thinking about.

[Marketing Military Realism in Call of Duty 4, Modern Warfare](#)

Games and Culture July 2012 vol. 7 no. 4 305-327

"This essay investigates the challenges that video game marketing encounters when selling the pleasures of playing virtual war. ... Call of Duty 4: Modern Warfare, .. is the first of the franchise to be set in the 21st century and immerse players in contemporary theaters of war. ... marketing paratexts .. suggest particular textual readings .. with the goal of insulating Call of Duty's virtual war play from interpretations .. that might link the violent play on-screen to the worldly violence unfolding in Iraq and Afghanistan."



"Sheik12" writes on [GameSpot](#) and poses the essential question:

"My parents want me to stop playing this game because it is too violent. They say a soldier who has seen combat would never want anyone to play this game. They also say this is desensitizing me to the atrocities of war.

Are they just dumb or am I really a terrible person?"



A commentator responds:

"Your parents aren't dumb and you are not a terrible person but this game is extremely violent, a friend of mine who was over in Iraq, cannot play this game cause it make him wig out. If anything I think this game opens people eyes about the terrible thing that happen in th ereal world, I know this is only a game but the situations and combat are extremely plausible and realistic (aside from the game stuff ie, respawn and stuff like that)."



Video game violence is intelligently considered at [Crystal Gamer](#) from a gamer's point of view, not from a parent or academic point of view.

And there's this article in the Montreal Gazette titled "[Why the debate over violent video games isn't evolving.](#)" that says:

"If you stop to think for a moment, you can have this rather disturbing realization: this is what war has become — sterile, faceless, and very much like a video game. Soldiers can fight while remaining completely cloistered from the pain and destruction of battle, seeing the enemy as nothing more than pixels on a screen."

[Beyond Freedom of Movement, Boys Play in a Tween Virtual World](#)

Games and Culture July 2012 vol. 7 no. 4, 281-304

"In this article we investigate boys' play in a tween-centric virtual world called Whyville.net, which had 1.5 million registered players at the time of study. ... Whyville provided the boys with relatively low consequence opportunities to experiment with different masculine identities"

Whyville is for kids from 8 to 12 years old and is on the web [here](#):

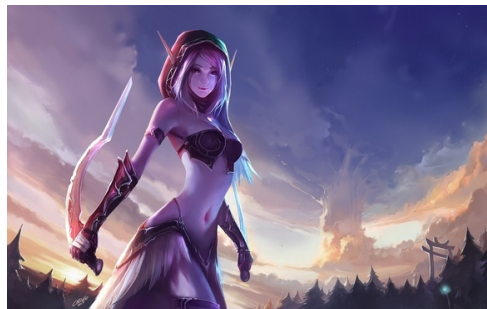


And [here's an article](#) on how Whyville is being used to promote flu shots.



[Digital Elves as a Racial Other in Video Games, Acknowledgment and Avoidance](#)
 Games and Culture September 2012 vol. 7 no. 5 375-396

"Elves are a long-standing cultural trope in the West, where they have often represented the other and fears associated with otherness. Elves continue to do the same cultural work today and are a fixture of fantasy settings. ... Given the dearth of work on elves in modern narratives, the cultural work of elves as the other in video games is analyzed here. ... World of Warcraft is somewhat exceptional in its portrayal of elves, digital elves are mostly portrayed similarly to a historically idealized real-world Western minority."



World of Warcraft elf

AlterGamer has an article titled , "[Don't Be An Elf: Racism in Video Games](#)".

At [Cracked.com](#) is an article that might be titled "Elves: Overcompensating for Something?"





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