This research guide is intended to be a general introduction to finding academic sources of information in mass communication.

For research assistance send an email request to David Hoxie:

hoxiede@ab.edu
Example topic:
What would be considered an Epic Video Game?

Use this Research Guide as a template for your searches. To complete library research on your topic you will need to add to and/or substitute search terms for the ones indicated in this Research Guide.

When searching any of the periodicals databases be sure to use the TI(Title) and TX(Text) search fields:

TI(Epic): The word ‘Epic’ must appear in the title of the article.

TX("video games"): The phrase ‘video games’ must appear in the text of the article.

Can’t see the Forest for the Tree?

1. Encyclopedia articles provide a broad general overview of a topic.

2. Books provide a more in-depth overview of a topic.

3. Journal articles provide detailed in-depth information on a topic.
The Primary Reference Collection has hundreds of college-level encyclopedias that are searched simultaneously. The results are listed by relevance to the search topic.

https://my.ab.edu
A simple keyword search.

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**WORK OVERVIEW**

**Gilgamesh Epic**, page(s): 486-487. word count: 607.

*Encyclopedia of Global Religion*


The ancient Mesopotamian Epic of Gilgamesh has earned a preeminent place in world literature because of its universal themes of love, loss, despair, and coming to terms with fate. Its motifs and themes have echoed...

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**TOPIC OVERVIEW**


*Poetry and Drama: Literary Terms and Concepts*


The earliest known epic poetry is that of the Sumerians. Its origin has been traced to a preliterate heroic age, not later than 3000 BCE, when the Sumerians had to fight, under the direction of a warlike aristocracy, for...

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**TOPIC OVERVIEW**


*The Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*


Comprising a vast range of global traditions, incl. origin myths, wisdom lit., *comedy*, and *satire*, the term beast epic generally designates more or less structurally unified narratives featuring animals as characters...
The Development of the Epic

The earliest known epic poetry is that of the Sumerians. Its origin has been traced to a preliterate heroic age, not later than 3000 BCE, when the Sumerians had to fight, under the direction of a warlike aristocracy, for possession of this fertile Mesopotamian land. Among the existing literature of this highly gifted people are fragments of narrative poems recounting the heroic deeds of their early kings: Enmerkar, Lugalbanda, and Gilgamesh.

By far the most important in the development of Mesopotamian literature are the five poems of the Epic of Gilgamesh. This cycle tells the odyssey of a king, Gilgamesh, part human and part divine, who seeks immortality. A god who dislikes his rule, fashions a wild man, Enkidu, to challenge him. Enkidu first lives among wild animals, then goes to the capital and engages in a trial of strength with Gilgamesh, who emerges victorious. The two become friends, set out on various adventures, in one of which they kill a wild bull that the goddess of love had sent to destroy Gilgamesh because he spurned her marriage proposal. Enkidu dreams the gods have decided he must die for the death of the bull, and, upon awakening, he does fall ill and die.

Gilgamesh searches for a survivor of the Babylonian flood to learn how to escape death. The survivor shows him where to find a plant that renews youth, but after Gilgamesh gets the plant it is snatched away by a serpent. Gilgamesh returns, saddened, to his capital.

The legend of Gilgamesh was taken over by the Babylonians. They developed it into a long and beautiful poem, one of the masterpieces of humankind.
ORIGIN AND GROWTH OF THE VIDEO GAME INDUSTRY

The first interactive computer game, Spacewar, was written in 1961 by an MIT student named Steve Russell on a Digital Equipment PDP-1 computer. The first consumer video game, Pong, was released a decade later in 1972. Throughout the 1970s and into the 1980s, most video games were played in arcades (in this chapter, we define video games to include arcade games, computer games, and home console games such as PlayStation). Several recurring themes began to emerge at this time: multiple companies vied for market dominance, displacing older systems with each new technological advance; the popularity and cultural impact consistently grew over time; and concerns arose regarding the effects games might have. Concerns about video game violence first became highly salient in 1976 with the game Death Race, in which the goal was to drive a car over stick figures called "gremmils."

Currently, video game images are created out of many polygons; therefore, the number of polygons processed per second (pg/s) is a common measure of graphics quality. The Sony PlayStation, released

in 1995, processed 350,000 pg/s. Sega’s Dreamcast, released in 1999, leaped ahead to more than 3 million. A year later, Sony’s PlayStation 2 jumped to 66 million pg/s. One year after that, Microsoft’s Xbox boasted 125 million pg/s. The stated goal for Sony’s PlayStation 3 is 1 billion. At the same time, this increased speed and graphic capacity allowed for games to become more realistic, including far more realistic and graphic violence. Returning to an old theme, the top-selling video games from 2001 to 2003 were the Grand Theft Auto, which included running down pedestrians with cars, and killing police, prostitutes, and others with a variety of weapons. The video game industry is now bigger than Hollywood, raking in more than $10 billion annually in the United States in 2002 and 2003. As games have taken up more of children’s time and become more realistic and engaging, researchers have begun to study children’s uses of video games and the varied effects they may have.
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Thinking about video games: interviews with the experts
Heilman, David S., author.
Bloomington : Indiana University Press, [2015]
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Video games around the world
Cambridge, Massachusetts : MIT Press, [2015]
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Video games: parents' perceptions, role of social media and effects on behavior
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In general, the video game effects literature stems from social cognitive theories of media. According to this perspective, the prevailing content of a video game should predict increases in affect, arousal, cognition, and behaviors following video game exposure. If this exposure is repeated frequently enough over time, then players will adopt the “lessons” taught by video games into their everyday thoughts and behaviors (Anderson and Bushman, 2002; Anderson and Dill, 2000). Video games, however, may not be uniform in the “lessons” they teach players. Indeed, even violent video games are not simply hotbeds of violent content. For example, the popular Call of Duty and Resident Evil series require players to behave violently in order to protect other people or computer characters. Thus, in these games, aggression is taught in simultaneity with altruism. The questions then arise 1) whether social learning is an appropriate explanation for long-term effects of games, 2) whether games can only teach antisocial lessons, and 3) what are the relationships between different genres and varying real world behaviors. This study addresses video game effects from a long-term, holistic perspective, focusing on antisocial and prosocial outcomes, using a conveniently collected survey dataset.

Moreover, it is important to analyze video games by different genres. After all, the lessons taught by a violent first-person shooter zombie game are uniquely different from the

“...Advertising signs that con you Into thinking you're the one That can do what's never been done That can win what's never been won Meantime life outside goes on all around you....”

Bob Dylan, “It’s Alright, Ma.”
TI(Call of Duty) – search will include the words ‘Call of Duty’ in the title of the article.
TX(epic) – search will include word ‘epic’ in the text of the article.
Call of Duty’s own position within the mediated framework of World War II is outlined in no uncertain terms by Activision’s marketing. Bobby Kotick, chief executive officer of Activision, describes Call of Duty as “one of the greatest entertainment franchises of all time” and as “one of the most viewed of all entertainment experiences in modern history.” The sales figures and audiences commanded by the series go some way to supporting Kotick’s promotional hyperbole. Releases of new installments of the franchise exceed opening weeks for cinematic blockbusters in terms of promotion, scale, and initial profits. On average, 6.5 million people play a Call of Duty game online per day, making the franchise as much a social networking phenomenon (an aspect of the game that offers a potentially rich area for future exploration) as it is a gaming one. It should be noted, however, that the Modern Warfare installments of Call of Duty, which are set in hypothetical conflicts of the near future, are a large source of the franchise’s overall revenue. Despite the critical and commercial success of the first Modern Warfare (Call of Duty 4, released in 2007), Call of Duty 5: World at War marked a return to World War II, a move that was greeted with skepticism by both gamers and critics alike. Yet despite the initial misgivings of some players and commentators, World at War outsold Modern Warfare by more than two to one in the first week of sales in the United Kingdom. The game eventually went on to sell more than eleven million copies worldwide, ending not far behind the first Modern Warfare in terms of overall sales.
exhortations to “show no mercy” and to “kill them all” echo much of the anti-German rhetoric evident in Russia in 1945, it is only on German soldiers that the Russian soldiers take their vengeance in _World at War_. The buildings and rooms through which the gamer fights his or her way in both Stalingrad and Berlin in _World at War_ are eerily empty of civilians. In the Russian campaign of _World at War_, it is once again a soldier’s death that is positioned as the “ultimate” sacrifice in war, as Petrenko dies just before the Russian flag can be raised above the Reichstag. Although Petrenko’s death serves as a vivid reminder of industrialized warfare’s negation of individual heroism and the random nature of the industrialized battlefield, it also emphasizes the soldier’s suffering over the civilian’s. The absence of civilian suffering in a game designed to be an “adrenaline-filled, epic struggle” (as the Activision website describes it) is perhaps unsurprising, but the magnitude of the civilian losses associated with _World at War_’s two campaigns throws into sharp relief the size of the chapter that is missing from the broader cultural narrative of World War II. Although _World at War_ replicates existing absences in the archival footage and cinematic representations of World War II, it also intensifies them. The faraway places of World War II are transformed within the game into exclusive, extraordinary spaces known only to the soldier, infused with spectacle and intense excitement.
"video games" – using quotation marks around words or phrases indicates that the search should retrieve an article that has those words in the exact order shown.
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- "GAME (NOT) OVER: Video-Game Pastiche and Nostalgic Disavowals in the Postcinematic Era" (pp. 139-159)
  
  From: *Flickers of Film*
  
  JASON SPERB
  
  Rutgers University Press (2016)
  
  [Chapter]

- "CALLS OF DUTY: The World War II Combat Video Game and the Construction of the “Next Great Generation”" (pp. 128-143)
  
  From: *The War of My Generation*
  
  JEREMY K. SAUCIER
  
  Rutgers University Press (2015)
  
  [Chapter]
By far the most important in the development of Mesopotamian literature are the five poems of the Epic of Gilgamesh. This cycle tells the odyssey of a king, Gilgamesh, part human and part divine, who seeks immortality.

“The Development of the Epic” (see slide # 10)
8. **Video Games as Tillers of Soil.**

   By: Arena, Dylan. Theory Into Practice. Spring 2015, Vol. 54 Issue 2, p84-100. 7p. DOI: 10.1080/0040596071155015. Subjects: EDUCATION; VIDEO games; ELECTRONIC toys; ELECTRONIC games; CLASSROOC.

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7. **Video Game Addiction and College Performance Among Males: Results from a 1 Year Longitudinal Study.**


   Subjects: VIDEO game addiction; ACADEMIC achievement; MALE college students -- Attitudes; education; GRADE point average; DRUG abuse; DRINKING of alcoholic beverages

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More Than a Passing Fad

Teachers in the United States today are probably well aware that the vast majority of students play video games. In the 3 decades since video games exploded onto the U.S. scene in the early 1980s, they have progressed from a fascinating new novelty adored mostly by (and designed primarily to appeal to) teenage boys, to a common feature of basements and living rooms played by all manner of children, to a fixture of modern digital culture embraced in some way by pretty much everybody: male and female, young and old (Williams, Yee, & Caplan, 2008). Among Americans between the ages of 12 and 17 years, 99% of boys and 94% of girls report playing video games (Lenhart et al., 2008). Teachers may very well even be gamers themselves: 53% of American adults report playing video games (Lenhart, Jones, & Macgill, 2008).

Video games (software-based games played on dedicated gaming consoles as well as laptops, phones, airplane seats, etc.) are not just widespread; they are also big business in today’s economy. By several estimates, U.S. revenues from video games are now greater than those from movies and films combined, and in the fall of 2013, the video game Grand Theft Auto V broke all entertainment records by generating $1 billion of revenue in its first 3 days on store shelves (Griffiths, 2013).

And children are playing a lot. By one recent estimate, American students between 8 and 18 years old spend about 13.2 hours each week playing video games (Brockmeyer, n.d.). Some

Intrinsically Motivating

There is a good reason why so many people spend so much money and so much time playing video games: they are staggeringly engaging. No single game will please everyone, but any given person is likely to thoroughly enjoy at least one game. This is not to say that all of the time spent playing video games is joyful. Like most human endeavors, video-game play includes its share of tension, frustration, disappointment, discouragement, anger, and even boredom. But well-designed video games do a remarkable job of recruiting fundamental characteristics of human motivational psychology to compel players to weather these negative emotional states and keep playing.
Research Assistance

The Librarian can Help!

David Hoxie
hoxiede@ab.edu