

Trouble in River City: Why Videogame Research is Flawed

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With each new media development there has been a characteristic societal backlash. Just as there is a characteristic pattern of adoption of new technologies (Rogers, 2003), there is an equally characteristic pattern of resistance (Williams, 2006).

“We often assume that stories told in one medium are intrinsically inferior to those told in another.” Janet Murray



All violence is not the same

“Often, focusing attention on the medium is a convenient way of assigning blame while ignoring complex and troubling problems. Media coverage of new technology often generates a climate in which consumers of news media are terrified of phenomena which are unlikely to occur. Just as importantly, they are also guided away, purposefully or not, from complicated and troubling systemic social issues” (Williams, 2006).

Researchers need to be familiar with games, but most are not.

When studying the effects of some aspect of a game, other games used to compare *must* be similar in all other aspects. Tetris can not be compared with Doom.

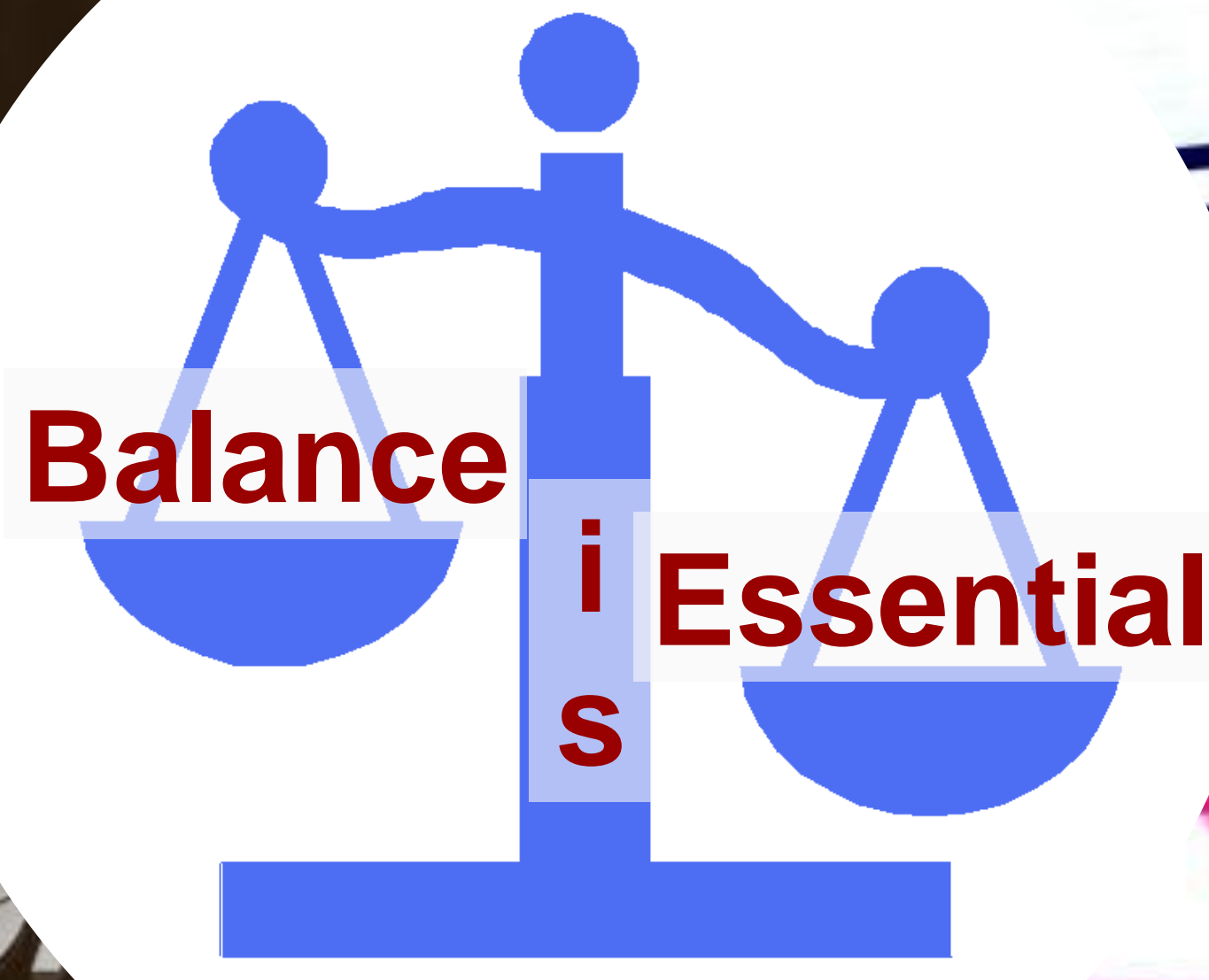
But what about school shootings and video games?

The U. S. Secret Service intensely studied 37 non-gang and non-drug-related school shootings and stabbings that took place nationally from 1974 through 2000. Only 1 in 8 school shooters showed any interest in violent video games; only 1 in 4 liked violent movies.

Media Effects: Do video games promote violence?

[US] According to the Federal Bureau of Justice Statistics, violent crime rates across the board have declined continuously since 1994, reaching the lowest level ever in 2005.

[US] Child abduction rates—always infinitesimal—continue to fall. Rates of violent crime against children have fallen by nearly 50 percent since 1973. The child murder rate is the lowest in forty years.



Excitement ≠ Aggression

MYTH: Because games are used to train soldiers to kill, they have the same impact on the kids who play them.

MYTH: Video game violence desensitizes.

MYTH: Video game play is anti-social.

MYTH: Only boys play violent games

MYTH: Video game s are primarily for kids

Correlation ≠ Causation

Context is Key

For more resources try:
<http://tinyurl.com/36xjbre>