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LEARNING FROM VIDEO GAMES (AND EVERYTHING ELSE)

The General Learning Model

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Abstract: Video games can have many effects on players, some of which could be intentional effects (e.g., games designed to train health compliance behaviors), and most of which are unintentional (e.g., violent games, stereotypes, gaming disorder). Some of these areas of research have been seen as controversial, but many of the controversies can be at least partially resolved by considering the learning mechanisms underlying the effects. We describe the General Learning Model in greater detail than has been provided elsewhere, including short-term and long-term mechanisms, processes of learning and forgetting, and moderators of learning. Video games use many of the best practices to train for both mastery and for transfer of learning. The implications for re-interpreting the literature on violent video games and gaming disorder, as well as for applied social psychology broadly defined, are discussed.

Keywords: General Learning Model, gaming disorder, learning mechanisms, prosocial video games, violent video games

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