

# Modeling Scholarly Inquiry: One Article at a Time



**IOWA ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGE &  
RESEARCH LIBRARIES**

**SPRING CONFERENCE  
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**ST. AMBROSE UNIVERSITY**

# Student research questions

- Why is the media racist?
- When local television news programs report violent crime, do they reinforce negative stereotypes of African-Americans?



# Student research questions

- Why are gamers violent?



- Does playing violent video games increase aggression in college students?

# Student-generated thesis statement



- Evidence suggests that playing violent video games may increase aggression in college students through cognitive, emotive, and behavioral reactions in controlled situations.

# Modeling Scholarly Inquiry: One Article at a Time



## LIBRARIANS

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# 1. How does it happen?



- Required English 102 course, *Composition and Rhetoric II*
- Process-based, collaborative unit
- Common research question and 3 common articles discussed in class (all class/small groups)
- Deliverable: Individual papers proving common thesis

## 2. What needs are addressed?



- Students underprepared for research/writing in subsequent required course
  - RES104 *Introduction to Research Writing*
- **Tasks:**
  - *Narrowing topics*
  - *Researching focused questions*
  - *5-page thesis papers*

### 3. What opportunities prompted the unit?



- Com 101 common assignments begun in 2001/02

## 4. What are the outcomes?



- **Students will:**
  - Identify a valid thesis statement
  - Identify credible sources
  - Read journal articles and identify evidence that supports, refutes, or modifies the research question
  - Write a short thesis-driven paper based on credible sources
  - Cite and use sources correctly

# Outcomes Frameworks



- ACRL Standards & Writing Program Administrators Outcomes

Unit Outcomes	ACRL Outcomes	WPA Outcomes
C. Identifies evidence from 3 journal articles to support or refute a thesis	<p>3.1a: Reads the text and selects main ideas</p> <p>3.1b: Restates textual concepts in his/her own words and selects data accurately</p> <p>3.1c: Identifies verbatim material that can be then appropriately quoted</p> <p>3.3a: Recognizes interrelationships among concepts and combines them into potentially useful primary statements with supporting evidence</p> <p>3.4b: Uses consciously selected criteria to determine whether the information contradicts or verifies information used from other sources</p>	Understands a writing assignment as a series of tasks, including finding, evaluating, analyzing, and synthesizing appropriate primary and secondary sources.

## 5. What is the learning theory?



- Information literacy & composition theory
- Critical thinking
- Ethics development
- Creative pedagogy

# IL/Composition Theory



- “Writing centers and libraries have been living parallel lives, confronting many of the same problems and working out similar solutions, each in their own institutional contexts”  
(Elmborg and Hook, 2005).
  - Both teach holistic, integrated processes.
  - Research & writing are connected and cyclical.

# Critical Thinking



- Process – driven decisions requiring supporting evidence & value judgments (Norris, 1989)
- Awareness of incomplete arguments
- Challenges to personal beliefs (Hughes, 2000)

# Ethics Development



- Call for colleges to teach students how to “offer and demand evidence...for their moral and political positions” (Ann Colby et al., 2003)
- ACRL IL standard 3.5 “the information literate student determines whether the new knowledge has an impact on the individual’s value system....”
- Students have trouble analyzing complex questions for which there is no single answer

# Creative Pedagogy



- **Requirements beyond developmental level**
  - Vygotsky's scaffolding applied to guide students beyond their comfort zone
- **Peer collaboration is required for 1<sup>st</sup> year students**
  - Synthesizing information
  - Organizing sources
  - Defending claim (Higgins, 1993)

## 6. How does the unit work?



- 8 class days
- Librarians involved on Days 1-5
- Tutors involved days 2-5

# Day 1



- Last 15-20 min. of class
- Librarian introduces e-reserves and topic

## Day 2



- News articles or websites to introduce topic
- Begin modeling reading 1 scholarly article through in-depth discussion & annotation



# Sample class article



Journal of Experimental Social Psychology 38, 283–290 (2002)  
doi:10.1006/jesp.2001.1502, available online at <http://www.idealibrary.com> on IDEAL®

## Effects of Violent Video Games on Aggressive Behavior: Potential Sex Differences

Bruce D. Bartholow

*University of Missouri–Columbia*

and

Craig A. Anderson

*Iowa State University*

Received July 31, 2000; revised August 15, 2001; accepted August 30, 2001; published online December 3, 2001

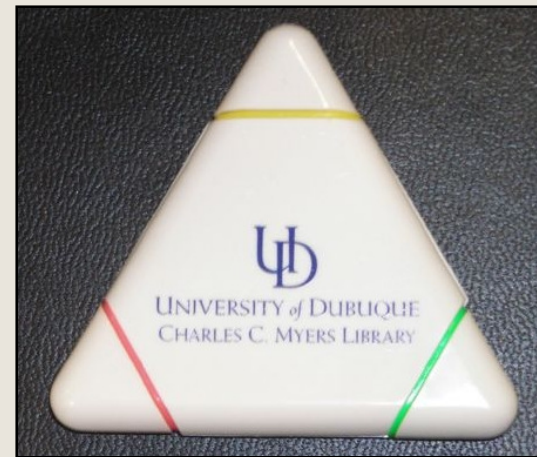
Evidence of the effects of playing violent video games on subsequent aggression has been mixed. This study examined how playing a violent video game affected levels of aggression displayed in a laboratory. A total of 43 undergraduate students (22 men and 21 women) were randomly assigned to play either a violent (*Mortal Kombat*) or nonviolent (*PGA Tournament Golf*) video game for 10 min. Then they competed with a confederate in a reaction time task that allowed for provocation and retaliation. Punishment levels set by participants for their opponents served as the measure of aggression. The results confirmed our hypothesis that playing the violent game would result in more aggression than would playing the nonviolent game. In addition, a Game × Sex interaction showed that this effect was larger for men than for women. Findings are discussed in light of potential differences in aggressive style between men and women. © 2001 Elsevier Science (USA)

*Key Words:* aggressive behavior; video games; sex differences; provocation; punishment.

# Day 3



- Conclude discussing first scholarly article
- Groups are assigned



- Facilitators prepare students to read another article by examining section headings

# Day 4



- **Small groups meet with facilitators**
  - Groups of 4-5 students
  - Each group discusses another article in detail
- **Groups determine evidence relevant to research question**



# Day 5



- Small groups present relevant evidence
- Class determines common thesis statement

# Day 6



- Instructor leads class in creating outline
- Review of quoting/paraphrasing/summarizing
- Review of citation style

# Day 7



- First draft due
  - Includes references
- Peer-review in class



# Day 8



- Final paper due
- Portfolio includes:
  - Annotated articles
  - First draft with references
  - Peer-review forms
  - Additional drafts
  - Final draft with references

## 7. Isn't this too much hand-holding?



- Reading and synthesizing is difficult for students
- Models scholarly inquiry as collaborative & reverses misconception that research writing is isolated
- Changes power relationships
- Introduces students to librarians and writing tutors

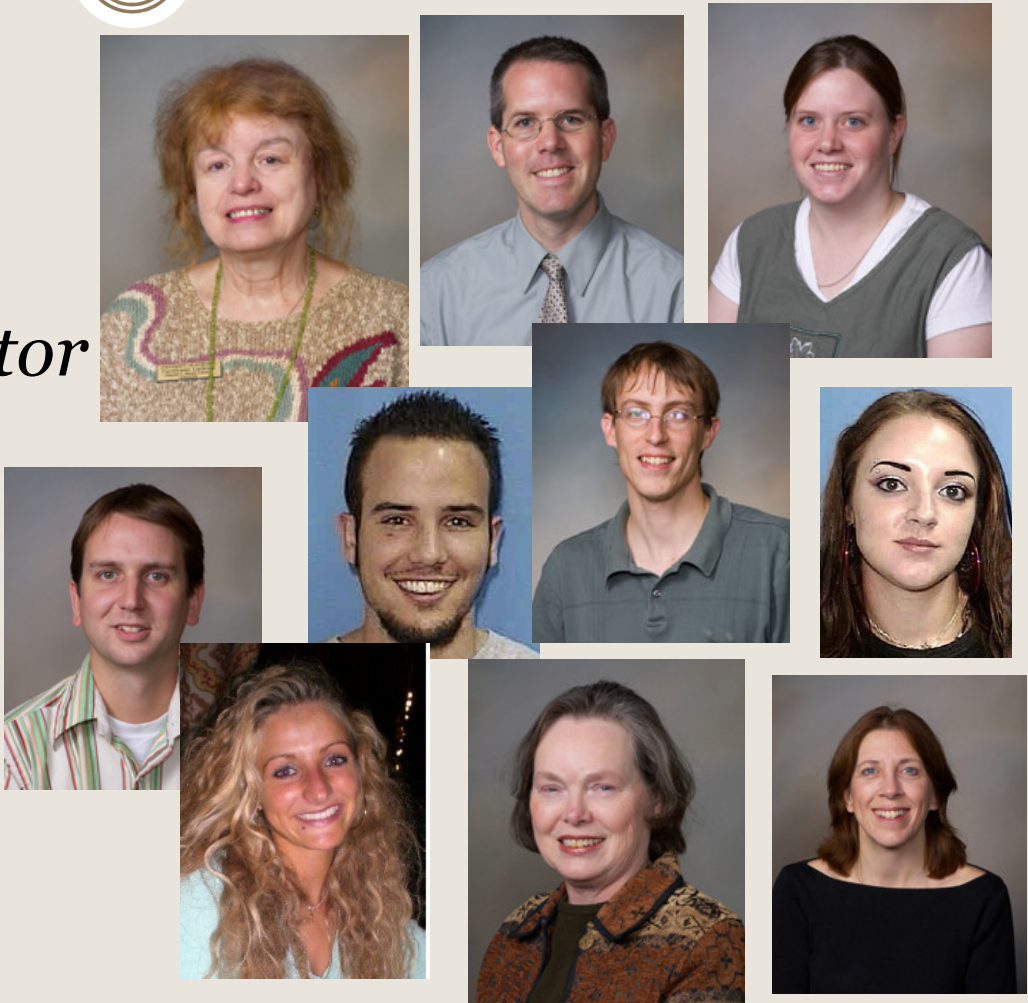
## 8. How was the unit planned?



- Following pilot, librarians requested additional faculty input
- Individual relationships leveraged into departmental support
- Collaboration increased during 4 semesters so far

## 9. Who is involved & what are their responsibilities?

- *Faculty*
- *Librarians*
- *Writing Center Director*
- *Writing Tutors*
- *Students*



# English Faculty



- Create & share assignment sheets, rubrics, and ideas
- Start & end the unit by building on writing concepts practiced throughout course
- Facilitate one group
- Final assessment: grading
- Help choose topics
- Available for students outside of class

# Librarians



- Choose topics/articles
- Lead initial topic & article discussion
- Facilitate one small group
- Available outside of class for students
- Schedule unit with instructors, provide materials:
  - Brochure
  - Faculty presentations

# Writing Center Director



- Schedules peer & professional tutors for unit
- Trains & prepares tutors
- Available outside of class
- Facilitates groups in other sections

# Peer & Professional Tutors



- Each facilitate one small group
- Available outside of class in Writing Center



# ENG102 Students



- Prepare by reading each day's article
- Actively participate in class and small group discussions
- Write individual paper
- Meet with Writing Center tutor if desired

# 10. How are topics & articles chosen?



- Provocative, timely, ethical topics likely to be of interest to students
- Article criteria:
  - Length (ideally 6-12 pages)
  - Accessibility
  - Importance in field
  - Varying authors
  - Fit with research focus
  - Clear thesis
  - Currency

# 11. How is the unit assessed?



- Part of overall IL assessment plan
- Pilot written assessment Fall 2007
- Some questions from baseline assessment (TRAILS)
  - 83.3% could ID appropriate research paper topic (+7.6%)
  - 62.5% could ID resource type from MLA citation (+24.4%)
  - 75.0% could ID example of proper paraphrasing (+38.2%)
  - 29.2% could ID example of bias (-2.2%)

# Overall assessment



- Grades/quality of student work
- Process more than product
- Success in RES104 Introduction to Research Writing



## 12. How has the collaboration worked?



- Different roles but common goals for students
- English faculty, tutors and librarians meet separately as needed
  - Jessica is liaison between groups
  - Anne Marie meets with new instructors individually
- Has increased opportunities for additional collaboration

## 13. What are the librarians' perceptions?



- Finding right topic & articles can be time-consuming
- Scheduling and collaboration takes time
  - ENG102 accounted for 86 of 375 IL sessions in 2006-2007
- Great interactions with students

## 14. What are the faculty members' perceptions?



- Some apprehension at first about process & time commitment
- Some requested additional librarian involvement
- Many modified timeline

"I believe the students were energized by the discussions led by the librarians in the small groups. I, on the other hand, need a bit more work pulling information rather than pushing it."

## 15. What are the Writing Center Director's perceptions?



- Scheduling & training tutors takes time and resources
- Additional visibility for Writing Center

## 16. What are the tutors' perceptions?



- More time for positive interactions with students
- Comfort level increases the more they participate

“Working in small groups with peers  
...really brings the freshmen out of  
themselves and gives them a feeling  
that their learning is important.”

“It also made me realize that  
what I had learned was  
actually being used...”

## 17. What are the students' perceptions?



- Topics won't engage every student
- Some students find it difficult to detach from personal experience
- Want to advocate opinions & unsure how to use evidence
- Most enjoyed experience & felt successful

“Best part of the entire ENG semester”

“I feel like I am more prepared for the research writing class that I am taking next semester.”

“That was the closest I have ever worked with a teacher.”

## 18. What's next for this unit?



- Increasing student accountability through small writing assignments throughout unit
- *Long-term*: use secondary English Education majors as peer group leaders
- Continue using new topics with faculty input
- Switch to APA format
- Use course management system with e-reserve links

## 19. What's next for other courses?



- More opportunities to collaborate with faculty and between Writing Center & librarians
- Reinforce concepts in upper-level major courses

## 20. What did you learn?



- Peer collaborative learning is central to research writing and critical thinking.
- Ethical questions lead to critical thinking.
- Librarians and writing center professionals are well-positioned to take the lead in teaching critical thinking.

## More information



- Knefel, M.A., Waelchli, P., & Gruber, A.M.H. (2008). Modeling academic inquiry: One article at a time. *College and Undergraduate Libraries*. In press.
- These slides will be available through <http://www.iowaacrl.org> soon after the conference.

# Suggested resources



- Association of College & Research Libraries. *Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education*. Available from <http://www.ala.org/ala/acrl/acrlstandards/standards.pdf>
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