

Direction for Future Studies and Multidisciplinary Discussions

The Summit generated many ideas for the future direction of research and multidisciplinary discussions on video game effects, video game ratings, education and public policy arenas. Moving these ideas into generation of specific research proposals or future discussion forums is a central component of the 10-year action plan. Research and discussion ideas spanned all issues discussed during the Summit.

These ideas are in addition to recommendations for research studies from the [Education](#), [Public Policy](#) and [Ratings](#) Working Groups. Among those ideas:

Approaches for improving the validity, reliability and effectiveness of video game ratings

Concerns were discussed extensively during the video game ratings panel and working group about the lack of behavioral research regarding use of video game ratings, the limitations in the amount of detail about content in the current rating system, and the lack of transparency regarding standards in how content descriptors are applied and how to improve scientific reliability and validity.

Expanding the realm of media effects research

Research proposals advanced by Dorothy Singer, PhD, expand beyond correlations between violent video games and aggressive behavior, to broader individual and social psychological and cultural effects, including:

- Imagination: How does video game playing affect individuals' capacity for imagination? What effects do video games have on fantasy/reality distinctions?
- Identification: Do video game players identify with characters they see in video games? ([Calvert and Turkel citations](#), *Imagination and Play in the Electronic Age*, Singer and Singer, Harvard University Press, 2006)
- Values, morality and ethics: To what degree do video games influence users' values, morality and ethics?
- Attention and concentration: How does video game playing ability affect children's ability to attend to and concentrate on daily materials in the classroom? What are the associations between student grades and video game playing?
- Social-emotional aspects:
 - Decreased empathy: This has been found in current literature on violent media effects (see Anderson and Bushman citations), but received little attention. It could benefit from either increased publicity, or further research to confirm the findings and generate renewed public interest in this dimension of media effects.
 - Expanding beyond aggression, media effects research should explore effects of video game playing on individuals' capacity for sharing, caring and helpfulness.

Increasing options and opportunities to utilize video games in education:

This approach has been proposed by the [American Federation of American Scientists](#). Specific ideas for positive attributes of video games could include:

- Developing video game options that would teach required skills
- Developing video games that teach strategic and analytical skills
- Using video games to teach capacity to adapt to rapid change

Research to create and implement educational programs for news media and the judiciary on media effects:

The news media and judiciary are the proposed targets of educational programs because of their significant influence in framing the public policy agenda and shaping opinions about media effects, particularly violent video game effects, for the general public.

Education of these non-scientists is particularly important in helping news media and judges make informed judgments about media effects scientific findings. Research proposals could specifically address deficient understandings the news media has in interpreting and reporting on media effects

Research proposals could tailor programs on multiple levels of education for the media and judiciary, such as:

- Training on basic behavioral science approaches, probabilities and risk factors
- Building awareness of the validity and reliability of research, focusing on media effects studies
- Designing educational programs to address specific, but common, misconceptions about behavioral science research, and particularly media effects research