

“it is not enough to diversify product lines” and that “such representations will not necessarily teach children about their own experiences of discrimination or systematic inequalities in the world around them” (p. 148). This call to action is one of the most promising aspects of the book. Rosner invites the reader to be an active participant and observer of childhood artifacts, and everyone from scholars of play to toy industry professionals to guardians can benefit from this message.

—Michelle Parnett-Dwyer, *The Strong*,
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Play like a Feminist

Shira Chess

Cambridge, MA: 2020.

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Playing like a Feminist begins with two aims: to introduce gamers to feminism and feminists to games. Chess argues that considering feminism will allow gamers to embrace equality and improve video games. Additionally, encouraging feminists to rethink the value of play can unlock the resistant potential of leisure and playful experiences. While the book is unlikely to connect with gamers unfamiliar with feminism, it is the second aim, addressed to feminists, where the book is most successful.

Chess begins by describing the complicated relationship between play and girlhood, where doing things “like a girl” often means doing things poorly. Chess

acknowledges intersectionality involved in considering what it might mean to “play like a woman.” It is this question of how women play, or how might they play, that sets up Chess’s productive combination of game, feminist, and leisure studies.

Chess encourages feminists to play games and argues for the importance of leisure in discussions of equality. She feels feminists should advocate for equality in play in the same way they advocate for equality in the workplace, education, and health care. Play is liberating. It is not frivolous but rather leads to a fulfilled life. For Chess, this means play is something that should be encouraged and advocated.

Chess illustrates the disparity that surrounds play and leisure. Play is privileged. It belongs to those with the time and resources to partake. Leisure for women tends to be structured, productive, and contained. Chess looks to temporalities to imagine a more egalitarian and freer type of leisure. Recognizing the restrictive nature of normative notions of time, Chess explains how modern technology allows people small escapes from their normative timelines into places of play. Smartphone users can play mobile games in the “between” moments which would not traditionally involve leisure. These nonproductive interruptions illustrate the freeing potential of play.

Feminists should not only advocate for play, but they should also consider using play in their activism. Chess explains how play can be a vehicle for feminist protest. They look to the power of laughter to disrupt. Playing can work to attack institutional structures. In the same way, feminists playing games can challenge toxic gamer culture and a game industry built

on glorifying unhealthy working conditions. Chess defends their stance on bringing feminists into game spaces despite the typical toxicity found in these spaces. For the industry to change, there needs to be more diverse gamers, and feminist gamers could have a hand in remaking game spaces into spaces of equality.

Chess's book is an accessible look into the importance of play and the usefulness of video games. While some of the points seem obvious and terms may seem over-explained to scholars, the book's reach and accessibility makes this approach necessary. The book is not just for game scholars, feminist scholars, and gamers. It is for anyone interested in the topic. This broad target makes Chess's book a greater contribution to the field than its arguments alone. Introducing more people to both feminism and play can help to strengthen both. *Playing like a Feminist* is an engaging and informative read that will have readers looking to go play!

—Steffi Shook, *Manhattanville College, Harrison, NY*

Making Games for Impact

Kurt Squire

Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2021. Contents, introduction, coda, acknowledgments, references, and index. 252 pp. \$30.00, paper. ISBN: 9780262542173

Beginning with the assumption that games are effective learning tools and that a market for games designed for nonentertainment purposes exists, Kurt Squire's

Making Games for Impact pairs a practical account of the author's experiences directing the Games + Learning + Society + Center (GLS) at the University of Wisconsin—Madison with broader discussion of designing games for social impact in general. In doing so, Squire situates social-impact games at the intersection of bureaucracies, epistemologies, and industries, taking care to describe the unique constraints that learning objectives and research agendas create for productions. The result is a must read for designers and administrators interested in integrating commercial game production into institutional research agendas.

Chapter 1 begins by outlining the common problems that designers of social impact games face, such as a lack of what commercial designers refer to as “polish” (p. 8). Chapter 2 describes how the Game + Learning + Society set out to address these problems by forming a unique design team (featuring artists, stem-cell researchers, and students) for the purposes of creating a competitive strategy game in which viruses combat the human immune system (Virulent). Chapter 3 charts the GLS's venture into the under-examined subgenre of knowledge games, which are games designed to teach science. Chapters 4 and 5 examine the institutional constraints that emerged when the GLS set its sights on commercial markets. Chapter 6 explores the GLS's work on games and mindfulness. Chapters 7 and 8 provide an in-depth look at the day-to-day operations of the GLS, and chapter 9 concludes with advice for setting up GLS-inspired development teams in institutional research settings.

For those unfamiliar with the field of