

## Book Review

# Internet Gaming Disorder: Theory, Assessment, Treatment, and Prevention.

King, D., & Delfabbro, P. (2018). **Internet Gaming Disorder: Theory, Assessment, Treatment, and Prevention.** Academic Press 294 pages. RRP: \$117.95 (paperback); \$153.93 (e-book). (ISBN 978012819241).

Reviewed by Ms. Jessica Price, Monash University, Faculty of Education, Victoria, Australia

The publication of King and Delfabbro's *Internet Gaming Disorder (IGD)* highlights an increasing trend of video gaming and the related need for practitioners to understand its theory, assessment, and treatment, as well as to acknowledge the need for research in this realm. The book was primarily written for researchers and clinicians; however, it is intended to be accessible to health professionals, policymakers, the gaming industry, parents, teachers, students, and gamers. However, the price point is something to note given the niche focus. This may deter individuals who would find the publication useful, whilst not working directly with IGD.

The major objectives of the book are to incorporate knowledge about gaming and IGD in one place, with a focus on being both informative and practical. Each of the nine chapters have specific take-home messages, progressing in a 'story-like' fashion - beginning with origins, theory, case formulations and assessment, treatment, prevention, and aims for future research. The authors describe gaming as a skill-based activity that '*enables individuals to compensate for the lack of purpose, control, and achievement in their real-world life,*' with a 'dysfunctional preoccupation' being at the centre of the disorder.

Complicated nuances of gaming are explained (including terms and types of gaming modalities that users frequently implement) in

a simplified way, such that even readers without gaming experience will understand. From a clinical perspective, this knowledge helps to build rapport with individuals by using terms that relate specifically to their world. King and Delfabbro's integration of theoretical models and frameworks to develop case formulations is practical and will be beneficial, as practitioners adapt them in their clinical work when assessing and treating IGD. An important aspect, highlighted by the authors, is that gamers tend to have '*beliefs about games that have a compensatory function related to the individual's perceived deficiencies in areas of control, mastery, and/or self-esteem*' (i.e. gaming is not only fun, but it may also serve as a solution to many of their underlying problems). By focusing on the function of gaming behaviour, this publication attempts to shift the understanding of gaming for enjoyment to gaming that is a problematic form of communication.

Despite the strengths of this book, it is clear that IGD does not have a 'gold standard' of treatment. As discussed in the final chapter, the study of IGD has been constrained by 'unknowns' and those with a vested interest in '*not knowing.*' It is therefore important that educational and developmental psychologists invest time in familiarising themselves with IGD, and all techniques within the ever-growing technological field. Given these advances, it is only a matter of time before IGD significantly increases, and it seems fitting that practitioners who work with different age groups be aware of these various presentations. Furthermore, educational and developmental psychologists may be able to conduct research that will develop an understanding of this phenomenon, which should simultaneously lead to improved treatment outcomes for individuals coping with IGD. This publication is a useful resource and useful starting point for those practitioners and researchers with an interest in this field, with the content making a noteworthy contribution to the understanding of IGD through theory, assessment and treatment.

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