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Heroes of the open (third) world: Killing as pleasure in Ubisoft's Far Cry series

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From the back of a decommissioned army truck, I observe the white crescent peaks of Kyrat, a fictional war-torn country modeled after Nepal. The beauty of the landscape is disrupted by border guards armed with AK-47s, who toss my United States passport in the mud before mercilessly gunning down my travel companions. Their despotic leader, Pagan Min, takes a selfie of us with his blood-soaked hand, showing me that I look like the locals: black hair, darkened skin, an Asian American returned to the homeland (see fig. 1). As the Clash's "Should I Stay or Should I Go" plays in the background, Min spirits me to his palace to eat crab rangoon from a table decorated in monkey heads while we admire a breathtaking view of what appears to be the Nepalese valley. I follow the groans of a rebel leader being tortured by electric wires, and after a blurred rush of explosions and gunfire, I am whisked away again, this time to a mountain village decorated with Tibetan prayer flags strung up alongside traditional skirts, dresses, and cotton jackets hung to dry. There I meet Amita, a gorgeous faction leader with a South Asian accent, who offers me the first real challenge of the video game I am playing: "We're in the middle of a fucking war," she says. "We don't need tourists."

I witness this experience while immersed in the 2014 open world game *Far Cry 4*.[1] The images of the snowcapped Himalayas are products of a Radeon graphics card leveled to operate at 1080 pixels, its code-rendering firepower pushing pixels of both Nepalese art murals and the gore of a soldier stabbed in the neck by Pagan Min's pink pen. I experience these scenes while sitting in the comfort of a living room couch, anchored to one spot by a game controller tied to a television set, speakers, and consoles. In the game I am Ajay Ghale, both a gun-toting killer seeking vengeance for my father and an Asian American tourist looking for my roots. As a diasporic returnee, I am co-opted by my family history to fight for rebel factions using a multitude of military weapons, all while hang gliding, zip-lining, cliff jumping, and hunting endangered species (see fig. 2). Indeed, my avatar's Asian American identity—meant to be played primarily by white users—enables me to undertake militaristic acts while ful-

Figure 1.
Far Cry 4: Selfie with Ajay Ghale and Pagan Min. Screenshot by author.

Figure 2.
Far Cry 4: Hang glider near rebel village. Screenshot by author.

filling a diasporic debt to my family, my home, and my nation. Then there is the real me: a Filipino American gamer who has grown accustomed to playing games as a white hero and has tolerated many uncomfortable reiterations of Asian stereotypes in games. Will this game, which also promises to give me the pleasure of killing, be any different from the others?

Like *Far Cry 4*, more and more open world games are now taking place in the global South. They commonly feature white male protagonists who are positioned to kill thousands of enemies and save brown locals while participating in tourist fantasies that include hunting game, water sports, and hang gliding. These games are "open" in that they give the player a sense of freedom in choosing his or her own path and follow nonlinear narratives. They are large in the sense that they contain elements of other genres: driving, first-person shooters, role-playing, mini-games, flying games, and text-based romance. The first open world games took place in farcical settings (the faux New York of *Grand Theft Auto III*), but since the peak of the Iraq War, more of these open world games have taken place in "exotic" locales. In *Crysis* (2007), the player investigates a space-alien structure just off the eastern Philippines coast, while in *Dead Island* (2011), the player battles zombies in an island resort off the coast of Papua New Guinea.[2] The Square Enix game *Just Cause 2* (2010), which takes place on a tropical island in Southeast Asia, wears its racism blatantly in its stereotypical mustached villains and, by tracking players' progress through the amount of "chaos" they have inflicted, ends with the explosion of an atomic bomb reminiscent of atomic testing throughout the Pacific.[3] As serious as these militaristic acts appear to be, throughout the game they are made pleasurable through tourist practices like parachuting and admiring island scenery, all while the player stabs, shoots, and bombs the island's locals. Indeed, one could read the "open" of open worlds not merely as giving an "open" feeling of freedom but also as in "open for business," where an imagined third world opens toward an American imperial hegemony disguised as progress, a sense of bringing order to third-world chaos.

As the popularity of exotic open world games has risen to the forefront of gaming awards and has sold in the tens of millions, we must ask how such games help construct notions of the global South as a space that must be secured by American military might and made commodifiable through a rampant tourist industry. For casual observers, games appear purely hedonistic, with scholars and critics citing moralistic refusals to engage with games, as they see play not as critical, experimental, and generative but as infantile and apolitical.[4] Even for some scholars, games like those in the *Grand Theft Auto* series merely reproduce dominant ideologies, making both gamers and developers seem

unable to critically examine artistic production in the way a reader of books or a viewer of films might. While many exotic open world games also can be faulted for reproducing hegemonic notions of third-world space, I consider how Ubisoft's *Far Cry* games have sought to resist easy incorporation into US imperialism through narratives that appear satirical or anti-imperial and through gameplay that, at times, can become aggravating and unfair. I focus on *Far Cry 4* (2014), where the player commands an Asian American returned son who arrives in Kyrat (Nepal) to bury his mother's ashes, but is led to help rebels vanquish a despot from Hong Kong. *Far Cry 4*'s attempts to "flip" the typical exotic open world narrative speaks to forms of American imperialism operating today, where discourses of US diversity, feminism, and social justice are deployed to legitimate militaristic acts. In *Far Cry 4*, the player is not merely a tourist/soldier but a stand-in for American multiculturalism, welcoming the player to wreak havoc, assured that the pleasure received from acts of killing will in the end be justified. What is intriguing about *Far Cry 4* is not so much its reproduction of imperial attitudes about the global South but the game's self-conscious efforts to negate its own racist violence while reinforcing the act of dominating foreign peoples and spaces as an act of pleasure.

This essay begins by exploring how exotic open world games construe narratives of tourism and militarization so that players can derive pleasure in acts of killing third-world locals while exporting Americanism abroad. I look particularly at the first three *Far Cry* games to consider how they produce third-world space and form subjectivities that take pleasure in military and tourist acts. At the same time, these open world games provide enough freedom for players to affect the story line that their acts never appear totally touristic or totally militaristic. Instead, tourist acts are performed as necessary measures (like hang gliding into an enemy base), while shooting and killing become just another way to experience different landscapes and peoples. The production of third-world space here can be found less in the game's narrative and more in its gameplay, as its in-game violence takes the form of repetitive "loops" (jump, run, aim, shoot). Such loops, I claim, provide what Roland Barthes might call "pleasure," a "form of drift" that secures and reproduces the player's identity and social world.[5] In the essay's second half, I consider pleasure, gameplay, and narrative in *Far Cry 4*, seeing the game as an attempt to revise typical exotic open world narratives by mobilizing a diasporic story of return. I argue that *Far Cry 4* resembles a contemporary form of empire as defined by Kuan-Hsing Chen: an empire that produces racialized "subempires" who reinterpret nationalist discourses in order to identify the national subject with the larger empire. In doing so, these subempires are incorporated into a

transnational imperial structure not as allies but as dependents.[6] Similarly, *Far Cry 4* deploys racialized and familial alignments as an alternative to traditional white savior narratives as a way to broaden imperial identity. But it also exposes the violence of this contemporary form, as the diasporic son (and the player) is meant to take pleasure in dominating the homeland through repeated acts of shooting and killing. This overlap of pleasure and imperial domination helps reconceive of imperial power beyond ideological rationalizations, logics, and justifications, but as an "erotics" of everyday imperial practices that pulls individuals into a comfortable and immersive drift.

The Open (Third) World

In 2009 two Swedish human rights groups, TRIAL (Track Impunity Always) and Pro Juventute, observed teenagers playing over a dozen military shooter games, including *Far Cry 2*. They aimed to show how violent acts in games could potentially lead to "violations of rules of international law."[7] The groups cite video games as especially relevant to the politics of militarization because unlike in literature, films, and television, video game players have "an active role in performing the actions."[8] The TRIAL and Pro Juventute report reflects the challenge of using games to talk about real-world violence, where violent acts in games are seen as having a causal effect on player behavior because they are "active" rather than passive. Indeed, this reliance on the gamer's active role evokes neoliberal attitudes of choice, individualism, and responsibility that elide how violence is constituted as an anarchic pleasure. Such readings focus on what a game "allows," "lets," or "encourages" players to do, ignoring the most alluring driving dynamic of these games: the open world mechanic, which gives a bacchanalian sense of freedom that comes with traversing a foreign environment. In such a world, the consequences of one's pleasure are nearly negligible, making the game space a laboratory of experimentation. Open world games are not merely power trips but experimentations with and against power—the power to fly, to kill at whim, to cause explosions and see where the pieces land. Such games can be read as experiences akin to tourist experiences, which also derive pleasure from dominating foreign spaces. Indeed, like tourist industries in the global South, the open world provides the illusion of freedom and choice in an exotic space, yet these choices are constrained and limited by infrastructure and design, and presume that such space must be kept secure. In freeing players from a linear narrative, open world games offer tourist experiences in forbidden places where players do not confront other tourists and are free to create their own personal travel stories. And like

forms of adventure tourism or backpacking, these games promise pleasures that overlap with the risk involved in military acts, the pleasure of discovering "the real thing" by venturing through spaces characterized as "dangerous, unknown, sexual, and unlawful."[9]

Open world games that merge military and tourist imaginings produce third-world spaces as not merely dangerous but as places that can provide pleasure through domination. Open world games mark the militarized/tourist space as one in need of rescue, where the player is meant to depart once the space reflects an American sense of stability. Indeed, stability here can be read as integration into a system of liberal democracy wherein the United States can obtain strategic positioning, a definition that fits Walden Bello's description of US imperialism in Asia less as about economic expansionism than as a goal-oriented regime wherein US *strategic interests* have been paramount.[10] Open world games make use of contemporary formations of militarism and tourism by letting the player identify with heroes whose militaristic actions are incorporated into their personal narratives of travel, allowing the player to speak not simply as a soldier securing land for a particular nation-state but also as a tourist (Euro-American, white, male) whose pleasure making includes securing "unstable" spaces of conflict. To complete an exotic open world game is to conquer a space not just as an enemy territory needing to be secured but as a scenic territory that can be conquered by the player's own play, thus broadening the military complex into the world of civilian tourism.[11]

As a network-based medium, games are perhaps the most everyday example of the fluidity of militarism, as their emergence comes "out of ongoing interchanges between war, simulation and contemporary technoculture."[12] Alexander Galloway points out that gaming has always had a hand in military culture, where "flight simulators, *Doom*, and now *America's Army* are all realistic training tools at some level, be they skill builders in a utilitarian sense or simply instructive of a larger militaristic ideology."[13] Indeed, in the age of drones and combat robotics, gamers have been particular targets for military recruitment, as their eye-thumb coordination, multitasking, team organizing, and target shooting marks them with an already established skill set.[14] Game studies scholars like Ed Halter and Nick Turse have traced the growth of military shooters from military projects, arguing that some video games (especially big budget games) prime players for military recruitment and reveal an "entrenched colonial logic instrumental for military recruitment and consent."[15] In contrast, Marcus Schulzke has criticized scholars for assuming that any representation of weapons in games is harmful to players, while films and novels are assumed to take a more critical stance.[16] Following this more-nuanced view of how

games constitute military violence, Nick Dyer-Witheford and Greig de Peuter argue in *Games of Empire: Global Capitalism and Video Games* that although games were developed through war technology and funding, game developers themselves have often come from countercultures "of psychedelic drugs and of political dissent" that have been "at odds with the military institutions."[17] Indeed, as games have a history of connections with the US military (*America's Army, Call of Duty*), it seems clear that many if not most gamers and game developers are able to consume and produce such products without allowing them to take on the instrumental purpose of military recruitment.

To avoid explicitly encouraging US imperialism, it is crucial in open world games that the avatar appears as neither an obedient American soldier nor a pleasure-seeking first-world tourist but a free subject who also happens to take pleasure in militaristic and touristic acts. In game systems that promise the pleasures of risk and reward, the third world is reimagined as a convergence of touristic pleasures (big game hunting, cliff diving) and militaristic pleasures (people hunting, bullet dodging). These game systems provide a useful framework to understand imperial violence as constituted through bodily sensations, as an "erotics" that floats far below the surface of public discourse. As the gaming scholar Amanda Phillips has argued, games provide a glimpse at sensations that are only revealed in real combat situations as scandals.[18] Phillips proposes the term *mechropolitics* to account for how video games "make[] death fun, not merely as a visual spectacle but as a cooperative activity performed with a machine and encouraged by the mechanics of game and system design."[19] Indeed, this distancing of militaristic acts from the pleasures of domination is particularly relevant in modern-day warfare, where, like the open world game, American military prowess provides a stage to bestow unprecedented amounts of power on others. These games expose how pleasure can act as a crucial motivation to exercise real imperial power, wherein goal-oriented narratives of rescue and liberation have so often been employed to deflect attention away from the real pleasure taken in enacting imperial violence.

The Pleasure of the Loop

To understand the function of pleasure in video games, I turn to Roland Barthes's *Pleasure of the Text*, where Barthes theorizes how pleasure can place readers into a seamless "form of drift" where they are "driven about by language's illusions, seductions, and intimidations, like a cork on the waves."[20] Barthes calls these texts that form the reader's identity and social world texts of "pleasure," which "contents, fills, [and] grants euphoria; the text that comes

from culture and does not break with it."[21] Though Barthes is concerned with literary texts, pleasure itself has been a crucial concept in game studies, and his multidimensional definition of pleasure can help fill in the gap between the pleasurable feelings of absorbing a text and the wider ideological social functions that sustain the reader's worldview. Using Barthes's definition, we can see video games as immersive reward systems that act as pleasure-inducing stimulants, seducing gamers into stable forms of identity. As Barthes writes, the concept of pleasure comes primarily from the need to categorize texts that bring "euphoria, fulfillment, [and] comfort," and to limit pleasure to a genre or form takes on the impossible task of envisioning "a vast, collective harvest" that would "bring together all the texts which have given pleasure to someone (wherever these texts come from)."[22] In literary texts, pleasure is so often discounted for the notion that literature is read for a higher moral purpose or for cultural appreciation. But with games, pleasure sticks out, as a video game's immersive grip remains relentless and unashamed. Though game theorists have long seen pleasure as central to the gaming experience, it has mostly been seen as a psychological, philosophical (existential), or ontological category, rather than an aesthetic, social, or erotic one. For Barthes, pleasure (*plaisir*) stimulates both socially and sexually, reproducing (with slight variations) one's very identity and social world.

For Barthes, pleasure is not necessarily about buying into propaganda or ideology but about the feeling of drifting in a secure space. Thus we can see games like *Call of Duty* and *America's Army*, which have been labeled "military propaganda" or "military porn," as *un*pleasurable to gamers who hope for a narrative with at least enough political complexity not to disturb their immersion. Barthes thus contrasted the text of pleasure that promotes a "comfortable practice of reading" with the text of bliss, which "imposes a state of loss, [it is] the text that discomforts (perhaps to the point of a certain boredom), unsettles the reader's historical, cultural, psychological assumptions, the consistency of his tastes, values, memories, [and] brings to a crisis his relation with language."[23] As the game scholar Georg Lauteren has argued, Barthes's notion of bliss (*jouissance*) seems to overlap with the experience of bodily immersion in games, but unlike pleasure, this comes not in the form of a drift but of bodily aggravation, stress, and discomfort.[24] Socially, such bliss invokes a crisis of dissolution, of losing oneself within the intensity of the experience, even if that experience is simply tedious. In combining the pleasures of militarism and tourism, games in the *Far Cry* series portray imperialist violence as ultimately about the social, aesthetic, and sexual dimensions of pleasure. How can these actions be read as inducing a pleasure that reproduces and secures the player's identity and social

world, or as an ecstasy that shocks the players, unsettles them, and causes them to reassess their given notions of third-world space?

The core mechanics of gameplay help reveal how exotic open world games offer pleasure in the form of drift, or bliss in the form of a bodily shock. Developers have termed this core "atom" of gameplay the *game loop*, defined as "the collective set of actions that the player will be doing over a specific time frame."[25] The main loop is the most rudimentary repetitive action, which in military shooters is the *jump, run, aim, shoot* loop. The reward for such repetition arrives both in the gameplay (experience points, money) and in the narrative (survival, plot progression). Then there are secondary loops, which establish higher-order goals that can be achieved through repeating the main loop. In taking a military outpost in *Far Cry 4*, for example, a secondary loop can look like *sneak inside, kill enemies, shut off alarms, capture outpost*. Whereas the main loop takes seconds to execute, the secondary loops take minutes, demanding higher rewards for achievement: new weapons/vehicles, and more progress in the narrative. Finally, there are tertiary loops, which can take hours to fulfill and rely heavily on the player's investment in the game's narrative. In open-world games, the tertiary loops look like *capture outpost, capture radio tower, complete side-quest, complete story mission.* After completion of this loop, the player is given the game's most important rewards. For the gameplay, this often means acquiring new skills, from running faster to riding elephants, to being able to stab two enemies at once. While these gameplay rewards add variations on the core mechanic, the game also offers narrative rewards through the ethical and moral progression of the hero as he grows from child to man, or in this case, from naive tourist to armed American soldier. These loops then expose the pleasure of games less in the rewards than through the repetitive practice of the loops, which vary enough to remain challenging and unpredictable, but also offer a form of drift that can feel secure and reassuring.

Game loops compel scholars to read games beyond the scope of ideological coding and encoding, of resistance and reproduction, but as reconstituting the violence of US imperialism within the realm of immersive pleasure. Indeed, the emphasis on pleasure in game loops shifts the meaning of violence from an act that must be legitimated to a distinctly goal-driven act that warrants the pleasure of killing with the promise of more pleasure to come (by more variations in the loops). As Ian Bogost points out, the meaning construed from games does not come from "a re-creation of the world" but from how the player interacts with the virtual world in respect to the game's "representational goals."[26] For many game theorists, the main stimulating emotion in playing games is in experiencing achievement through adversity, what Nicole

Lazzaro calls "fiero" and what Phillip Deen (via John Dewey) calls "the aesthetic deepening of everyday experience."[27] In exotic open world games, the player has the opportunity to use nonlethal means, or to reduce the number of causalities, yet excessive violence almost always becomes a norm, as it often just makes achieving goals that much easier. Violence is thus shaped as accidental. The hero activates a mine, leaving a full-on attack as the only option, or the nonplayable characters (NPCs) discover him, forcing him to defend himself. Or worse, an alarm is triggered, bringing truckloads of new enemies on-site, who are pinned easily onto the entrance for the player then to slaughter. This "violence by incident" shapes imperial violence as benevolent through intention rather than outcome, as the player's intention may always be the less lethal way (indeed, awards and skills are granted through less lethal means), yet inevitably the player will, time and again, end up using the more violent methods to accomplish the game's goals (as if the player did not really want to partake in violent acts).

In experiencing pleasure with every act of killing, violence turns into a habituated action made through the excuse of self-defense, and the standard through which all interventions are evaluated is through intention rather than outcome. Indeed, throughout the *Far Cry* series players can identify mixtures of real-world Asian crises—the poppy trade, the Chinese Cultural Revolution, dictators who are foreign educated. However, these games rarely provide opportunities to reflect on the imperial violence of the United States and its histories of warfare and tourism in the global South. The exclusion of these histories gives the players an idealistic travel experience, where they are free to immerse themselves in the staged authenticity of the locals. At the same time, this exclusion does not erase international intervention but merges all the interests of the international community into that of the player, who, as superhuman one-man army, is also a one-man tourist industry.

The *Far Cry* Series

The first *Far Cry* game, released in 2004, allowed players to command a former US Special Forces operative who sported Hawaiian shirts and rode hang gliders (see fig. 3). Since then, the *Far Cry* series has continued to bind the pleasures of militarism and tourism together by depicting the hero's journey as a way to obtain greater access to a local culture. The player neither secures resources for an imperial army nor simply tours the land. Rather, the player's lone heroism comes in intervening on behalf of the locals who have welcomed the hero into their paradise, but who lack the skills and knowledge (rather

Figure 3.
Far Cry: Jack Carver. Screenshot by author.

than the resources) to rescue themselves. With every reward, the player absorbs more local authenticity, either with "tataus" (warrior tattoos representing new skills) or with more enticing views of the local women. This overlap of military prowess with local authenticity speaks to a history of imperial discourses that see Asia as a series of crises in need of repair, where the "Asian lack of basic freedoms and civil liberties" is a reminder "of what the United States is proud to export."[28] As Bello has argued, the supposed lack of freedoms in Asia has continued to provide legitimacy to America's War on Terror.[29] The *Far Cry* series employs this discourse, but revises it by setting players on a path wherein every achievement distinguishes them from typical American tourists or typical American soldiers.

As one of the first exotic open world games, *Far Cry* (*FC1*) takes elements of the military shooter and combines it with the openness of a tropical setting, giving players multiple points of entry to invade military bases. The game has avoided the label "military propaganda" through its cheesy dialogue and its complete absence of local (brown) characters.[30] As Jack Carver, a former US Army Special Forces soldier, the player wields both a military backpack and a Hawaiian shirt as he traverses ancient temples and Japanese colonial-era outposts. While the game was a success, resulting in a 2008 movie adaptation and four spin-offs, the game's playful narrative failed to give any complexity to the setting and to American power abroad. For 2008's *Far Cry 2* (*FC2*), the

director, Clint Hocking, sought to give complexity to the series by depicting the hardened hyperrealist setting of an unnamed central African country. To get this complexity right, Hocking sent research teams to Africa and based story elements on literary works from Joseph Conrad and Frederick Forsyth.[31] His determination made *FC2* an unprecedentedly complex and ambitious open-world game, one with a narrative that explicitly critiqued human rights discourse by representing international actors as pleasure-seeking diamond hoarders.

FC2 depicts the malevolent effects of foreign intervention through the player's mission to kill the notorious American arms dealer the Jackal,[32] who ridicules the human rights language that calls him a "destabilizing influence" and critiques foreign intervention itself.[33] "It's not sick to arm people," he says. "The drone is the oppressor. The AK-47 is the great equalizer. I empower these people." Rather than place the player on a game loop to become "manly" or to "save Africa," the story's main dynamic is simply to kill the Jackal for money. The gameplay goes far in denying the player a power fantasy and instead explores the consequences of being exposed to relentless violence.[34] As the game journalist Tom Bissell has written, the act of killing in *FC2* does not give one pleasure but guilt, remorse, and disappointment. After Bissell throws a Molotov cocktail, he describes the terrifying screams of a man he sets aflame, causing him to feel "a kind of horridly unreciprocated intimacy with the man I had just burned to death."[35] He concludes that even as *FC2* rewards his murderous actions, it never "approves" of them and instead reminds the player "that you are no better than the people you kill. In fact, you may be much worse."[36] Indeed, as the player is not by default American, the Jackal represents the most American presence in the game, an unlikely "hero" who criticizes the international lack of force by providing force himself.[37]

Unlike most open world games, the loops in *FC2* that feature repeated killings are not pleasurable or easy but are disrupted constantly by the game's realist mechanics. During any main loop of *jump, run, aim, shoot*, players may be disrupted by symptoms of malaria (blurred vision) or get dizzy from running, or their weapons may jam. This realist mechanic led to the game's reputation as difficult and unrewarding. But as the game scholar Olli Tapio Leino has written, elements that players perceive as "unpleasant" or "faulty" are too often seen as a problem rather than as an effort to correspond to reality.[38] Leino traces this "faulty" correspondence through the "death loop," wherein the game saves their progress just before death or when cornered by enemies, or when they have poor health or are weakened by poison. The displeasure of playing *FC2* emerges through this loop, since nearly every save point in the

game seems to represent a new death loop. After saving their game, players are tasked to drive across the "free" and "open" game world where military outposts threaten them at every turn, and every minute players can be attacked by randomized military patrols. This makes the game not merely challenging but *unfair*. In every return from death, the players feel stuck, condemned to repeat the death loop, so that the "hedonistic project" (or pleasure project) of gameplay is dismantled by an aggravating, seemingly unfair problem. Here we can see some elements of the *Far Cry* series, especially *FC2*, as providing a bliss that unsettles the security of the imagined open (third) world and makes the delights of tourism and militarism seem frightening, exasperating, and most assuredly unpleasurable. Bliss helps reinterpret perceived "problems" like the death loop as a way to confront the assumptions behind gameplay itself—namely, that it be a pleasurable experience. In *FC2*, the realism and shock of the game's narrative corresponds to the experience of gameplay, where the pleasure of game loops are replaced by the bliss of slowness, sudden disruptions in the loop, and death. Here even touristic aspects only harm and aggravate players: the map is difficult to read as it jumbles in the hero's lap as he drives (see fig. 4), he is forced to spend time fixing cars, and the only currency in the game is rough diamonds, which makes buying anything other than guns extremely difficult. Rather than find a mechropolitical pleasure in death, the game strives to correspond with the reality of intervening as either a tourist or a soldier. Here a crisis promising pleasure offers only pain.

While critics admired *FC2* almost universally, many players like Jeffrey Yohalem, who would go on to be the lead writer of *Far Cry 3* (*FC3*),[39] found the game too aggravating to play. As Yohalem claimed, "I didn't have fun playing it, although I found the ideas really, really interesting."[40] In response, Yohalem sought to make *FC3* a far less realistic game, with none of the same "problems." In *FC3*, the first game in the series to top the sales charts, the player controls a privileged white traveler from Southern California, Jason Brody, who seeks to rescue his white American friends from a local Malay leader who inexplicably carries a Hispanic accent.[41] Throughout the game the player is challenged to rescue locals after witnessing shocking moments of violence, from seeing a man set alight in burning a box to undertaking missions involving sex trafficking, the forced army recruitment of children, slavery, and rape. For completing these killing loops, the player is rewarded with getting closer to the feminized figure of local authenticity, Citra, a local "warrior goddess" (see fig. 5), who challenges the player to gain her trust and sexual attention. Indeed, the rewards for completing the game's killing loops are distinctly touristic: Citra reveals legends of the island or puts the player into hallucinatory fantasies while she

Figure 4.
Far Cry 2: Using the in-game map while driving. Screenshot by author.

rides the player topless. As such, a hypersexual representation dominates tourist cultures in the Asia Pacific; we can read this act of touristic pleasure as converging with the militaristic pleasure of securing a feminized paradise. The game's representational goals here align with the act of providing rescue to brown women, doing away with the narrative complexity, as well as the death loops, of the previous installment.

While *FC3* tripled the sales of its predecessor, fans also began to see it as a type of military propaganda, particularly in its racism and white hero fantasy. Yohalem responded to criticisms by claiming that the game is a self-conscious satire. As a former intern for *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart*, Yohalem sought to create a satirical game that questioned the uneasy relationship between violence and pleasure: "This game is about entertainment, and about how far will you go in these loops."[42] The representation of violence and feminine hypersexuality thus appears, in Yohalem's view, as a way to expose how these killing loops themselves provide an unthinking, uncritical pleasure. Indeed, one could even read the player's avatar, Jason Brody, as a white tourist stereotype who enjoys narcotics and believes that he can become a local warrior. In the end, Jason's power fantasy is exposed when he is killed by Citra, the "tribal woman" who successfully used Jason's own whiteness and masculinity to manipulate him. Despite these satirical elements, the ideological split between narrative and gameplay keeps many players from noticing these self-aware elements;

Figure 5.
Far Cry 3: Citra Talugmai in her temple. Screenshot by author.

as the game journalist John Walker admits, *FC3* is "unquestionably one of my favourite games in a good long time, but not because of the story, and perhaps even despite it."[43] It would be difficult to find such a statement in a film or novel critique, but in playing a game, players are led to expect rewards more through notions of progress rather than notions of "good ethics," and so long as their characters continue to level up or the plot moves forward, they will continue to see pleasure in the next loop.[44]

The Asian Diasporic Hero in *Far Cry 4*

The failure of games like *FC3* to avoid charges of racism and militarism has challenged developers and writers to create entertaining shooters without alienating segments of their audience.[45] As the average gamer drifts past the age of thirty, and the "young white male" gamer becomes a less-dominant target audience, open world games have sought new ways to ideologically suture the contradictions that come in trying to separate the pleasures of domination with its violent real-world corollaries.[46] While *FC3* ultimately fails in its attempts to

perform as satire, its successor, *Far Cry 4*, employs Asian diasporic discourse, feminism, and postcolonial themes, not to distance itself from real-world violence, but to legitimate imperial violence by turning the players themselves into a symbol of American multiculturalism. In *FC4* the player commands Ajay Ghale, a South Asian American burdened by his debt to his homeland, his parents, and his own search for identity. In-game missions are fraught with diasporic clichés, from the push by rebel leaders on Ghale to make his father proud to side quests where Ghale discovers his roots in temples, mythical stories, and fighting arenas. As the lead director, Alex Hutchinson, explains, the story's narrative "is really about [Ghale] discovering his own relationship with the country. His family name, how people know him, what his parents were involved with, and then choosing what to do with the fate of Kyrat."[47]

The invitation to play as an Asian diasporic hero reflects more contemporary narratives of imperialism by taking the ethical capital of the local into the project of security itself. Whereas in previous *Far Cry* installments players could consume the local only as a white tourist, here the Asian American avatar allows players to undertake acts of tourism and militarism within their own homeland. As scholars like Leslie Bow and Jodi Melamed have pointed out, such a deployment of Asian American subjectivity has helped extend imperialist projects through diasporic networks in order to mark third-world spaces—rather than third-world bodies—as the sites in need of rescue. Thus the United States, as multiculturalist nation, appears too as the multiculturalist savior.[48] For many scholars in critical ethnic studies, such discourses of diversity and tolerance can reinforce the exceptionalism of the United States by focusing on how Asian Americans have gained recognition as non-Anglo citizen-subjects in contrast to "unstable" Asian spaces that conjure terrorism, ethnic civil wars, and "unfree" markets. In this sense, the cooperation of Asian Americans becomes living proof of the exceptionalism of US imperialism. Like in *FC4*, the figure of the Asian diasporic hero enables those acting in the name of American interests to partake in militaristic acts without the explicitly colonial narrative of white on brown rescue. Instead, the narrative of the diasporic hero emerges as a way to manage racial form from a confrontational anti-imperialism to a diasporic "root story." Indeed, *FC4*'s Ajay Ghale returns to Kyrat to bury his mother's ashes, which he carries with him throughout the entire game, occasionally talking to her through the urn. Yet Ghale is just naive enough about his own homeland to make him accessible to white players. He calls himself "A.J. Gale," while locals call him "Ah-jay Gha-lay," and he never seems to speak in the local language, though he can understand it. Rather than train Ghale in warfare, most of the game's missions reward the player with "diasporic rewards": Ghale takes pos-

session of his father's homestead, he is able to read redacted CIA files about his parents, and he is given the supernatural power to travel to Shangri-la and witness the founding myths of the Kyrati people. These diasporic rewards are exchanged for what can only be identified as a ritualistic drift of killings made easy by the pleasure of easy-to-play game loops.

In employing the Asian diasporic hero figure, *FC4* exposes how imperialism exercises its power not simply through an "imposition of force from the outside" but also from diasporic subjects who speak in the name of local issues.[49] As Kuan-Hsing Chen has argued, the limits of anti-imperial critique are in confronting locals who advocate for more interventions from imperial forces and do so knowingly, since for them imperial inclusion is more preferable than its alternatives.[50] As Ghale, the player is formed into an imperial soldier by supporting characters who remind Ghale that even though he is fighting for a rebel group (whose members could be construed as terrorists), he is really fighting for American values of diversity and democracy. Agent Willis, who helped Jason Brody in *FC3*, appears in *FC4* to reiterate the faults of the "white hero narrative" that the "diasporic hero narrative" seeks to replace. Willis tells Ghale, "Look at you, American in the inside and useful on the outside. You're the perfect wolf in sheepherder's clothing, way better than that SoCal douchebag [Jason Brody] I had to babysit in my last op. You're both patriots though." Here, the disgruntled CIA agent makes the co-optation of Asian American history explicit. As the "wolf in sheepherder's clothing," the Asian American can convince local populations of the merits of American intervention, thus helping detract attention from the pleasures that such intervention promises.

If much of a game's meaning comes from the representational goals and its system of rewards, one could find potential anti-imperial critique in *FC4*'s multiple endings, which change depending on whom the player aligns with. Unlike almost any other open-world game of its kind, *FC4* contains no "happy ending," but each choice the player makes ends in certain tragedy for Ghale's homeland. Unless he chooses to continue supporting the deranged Hong Kong despot Pagan Min, Ghale must choose to side with either the male rebel leader Sabal, who persuades Ghale with the debt of the father, or the female leader Amita, who persuades him with the debt of the mother. If players choose Sabal, they witness the (unsophisticated) limits of anticolonial discourse, as they help resurrect forms of traditional patriarchy (including child marriage). With this choice, players end up helping Sabal execute all "corrupted" villagers to fulfill Sabal's ultimatum that "there must be a cleansing before we can move forward." However, if players choose Amita, they then witness the (unsophisticated) limits of anti-imperialist Marxism, as Amita brings about

a new cultural revolution, destroying temples, growing poppies for the drug market, and forcing children to enlist in her new army. The cynicism of the story's three endings, with Kyrat being ruled by either the Hong Kong tyrant, the patriarchal man, or the revolutionary woman, all correspond to states of Asian nations seemingly in need of international intervention (Myanmar, the People's Republic of China, Cambodia, Laos, Indonesia). Indeed, these tragic endings reflect the hopelessness of imperial intervention, as the very goal of rescue becomes impossible, and players can replay the game numerous times seeking the good ending, only to find that it does not exist. Yes, players are free to choose, but by setting foot in Kyrat at all, they have already doomed the homeland to a tragic fate.

Ludo-Narrative Dissonance in *Far Cry 4*

In video games, player position is akin to a wandering warrior, solving problems and resolving issues from place to place, or rather from game to game, all the while taking in the pleasure of drifting from space to space. *FC4* takes part in this form but also reveals how imperialism deploys minority, postcolonial, human rights, and feminist discourses to mark the tourist/soldier as an honorary native. Amita's challenge, "We don't need tourists," is the first of many challenges that entice the player to "go native," a challenge met with compounding rewards that level up the player from being less of a tourist to being more Asian, even as missions require players to undertake touristic practices. In giving players a touristic/militaristic experience without consequence, *FC4* allows them to identify with a redemptive narrative that marks their acts of killing as pleasurable, since such acts are necessary to rescue brown brethren. Indeed, as a Filipino American player, I was constantly reminded of my own homeland debt by the various rebel leaders, who pressured and pleaded for me to avenge my family against the overseas imperialist. Yet, like clockwork, there I was again, killing brown men and women with my newly granted weapons and skills.

While the narrative of *FC4* appears difficult to evaluate, the game's persuasive meanings are revealed in its refusal to disrupt the game's killing loop or to restrict the player's pleasures. Like in *FC3*, the game loops are easy to execute and move in a fluid, unthinking drift that contrasts the narrative's shocks and ruptures as the game becomes increasingly violent. The absence of ludological (game) based ruptures in a narrative relying heavily on shock creates what game theorists call "ludo-narrative dissonance," a term coined by the creator of *FC2*, Clint Hocking, wherein the gameplay deeply contrasts the values and mean-

ings of the main narrative.[51] In *FC4*, this dissonance produces a gulf between the Asian diasporic hero narrative and the easing drift of the gameplay loops, which are rarely interrupted by any realistic or crisis-driven form but rather are unimpeded, making any destabilizing content appear part of the thrill of securing third-world space. For the game scholar Jesper Juul, actions in games carry "double meanings," where "we move a piece around a board, but this also means invading Scandinavia with our troops."[52] In military shooters, one can both click a mouse and kill an enemy in the same action, yet precisely how these dual actions correspond speaks to how the game forms player subjectivities.

The ludo-narrative dissonance in *FC4* exposes the contradictions of its "progressive" narrative by highlighting the repetition of the gameplay form—the same loops, the same rewards—but also exposes its reliance on racial stereotypes that help form imperial attitudes. In the very beginning of the game, the narrative avoids the need for Ajay Ghale, the returned son, to learn the skills of the Asian revolutionary warrior, as Jason Brody did by obtaining "tataus." Progress skills are still embedded into the gameplay, but with no narrative explanation except to rely on Asian American raciality ("naturals" at kung fu). Whereas in previous *Far Cry* installments, players commanded trained agents or acquired skills along the way, in *FC4*, Ghale needs no training. His abilities to shoot arrows, stab, and chuck grenades are distinctly racial. Indeed, even Ghale's hometown of Kyrat at first seems invested in the real politics of Nepal, but like other settings in the *Far Cry* series, Nepal was chosen not for its political history but for its top-down environment (see fig. 6). According to executive producer John Hay, Nepal was chosen primarily because it would "give players verticality" for acts like skydiving or driving a mini-helicopter, and could also provide "a variety of unique animals" for the player to hunt.[53] Similarly, the first two *Far Cry* games took place in exotic backdrops to showcase their game engines, which specialized in players seeing far distances without new loading times, and in keeping the entire game world alive in real time. In *FC3*, exotic Southeast Asian islands allowed the player to leap into caverns, hunt game, and hang glide. As in previous installments, *FC4*'s third-world backdrops facilitate the experience of the gamer, whose pleasure relies on a "realistic setting" that would, according to Hay, "leverage all the toys we were going to put in the game."[54]

The dissonance between *FC4*'s complex narration and the pleasures of its game loops reveals how attempts to make military intervention seem easy have been invested in denying pleasure as a crucial element in military recruitment and in imperial projects at large, where power over others is an implied or

Figure 6.
Far Cry 3: Protecting a rebel outpost from privateer mercenaries. Screenshot by author.

repressed element. *FC4* shows that any attempt to emphasize the libidinal pleasures of militaristic acts will always encounter the contradictions of such pleasure. Or, in Amanda Phillips's mechropolitical view, the crude juxtaposition of "fun and seriousness" can pressure players to reflect on their own desire to dominate others. The "serious" purpose of militarized actions permits the "fun" of killing local men while chasing local women. Pleasure thus exposes military violence as repetitive loops that necessitate pleasurable stimulants to meet a goal. The loops provide a pleasurable drift, allowing the soldier/tourist to ignore the wider effects of intervention. Despite the diverse contexts and histories at play, with *FC4*, the loop remains the formal "atom" of the structure, begging to be repeated ad infinitum, as it delays ideology itself through the immersion of a repeated action that discovers pleasure in domination. The author or designer thus does not push ideology on players but asks them to take the challenge of validating ideological notions of intervention for themselves—to prove that they are beyond discourses that archive the malevolence of real-life imperialism, the notions that inform Amita's original prompt, "We are in the middle of a fucking war, we don't need tourists."

Conclusion

The *Far Cry* series encapsulates the tension of games as military recruitment, as each game has sought to invoke touristic pleasures while weaponizing the player to kill relentlessly, yet each game has also sought to disrupt, debunk, and revise its own narratives and gameplay to account for the unethical practices of militarism and tourism. As Bogost has argued, interacting with a game does not guarantee "meaningful expression" but rather sets the stage for a discussion, offering players possible outcomes to their behavior and often revealing "the logic that would recommend such actions or beliefs."[55] In exotic open-world games, the stakes of this discussion become a factor in how US imperialism is reproduced and challenge the very "stage" where this discussion is meant to take place. Indeed, the mutually constitutive relationship between tourism and militarism is enabled by such games, even as these games have sought to refuse their own status as a recruitment tool for the US military (though they continue, almost incidentally, to spur young men toward military recruitment). By making calculated efforts not to explicitly encourage US imperialism, these games reveal how imperial violence is being reconstituted through gameplay as an expected pleasure, so that even projects framed as antiracist can continue to include pleasurable acts of imperial domination.

In conducting an overview of the *Far Cry* series, I have sought to examine games outside a typical ideological binary where "serious games" are indexed as "resistant" and games like those in the *Far Cry* series are dismissed as ideological. I hope instead to better understand the subject position of the game player who plays the *Far Cry* series and takes pleasure in each game in it, in both the loops that bring pleasure and the loops that bring frustration. For Barthes, the reader who partakes in both texts of pleasure and texts of bliss was an "anachronistic subject," an imperial subject who "simultaneously and contradictorily participates in the profound hedonism of all culture . . . and in the destruction of that culture: he enjoys the consistency of his selfhood (that is his pleasure) and seeks its loss (that is his bliss)."[56] To comprehend how players can switch between such forms (and accept them within the same game series) means understanding how games use sophisticated techniques and employ various discourses to allow the gamer to take pleasure in repeating the loop. It also means understanding how games speak to the multiple desires of the gamer: the desire to help and to envision American imperial power as benevolent, as well as the desire to tour and to understand other worlds beyond normative education. That all these desires are casually employed toward

habituated game loops of mass killing marks the anachronism of this subject, who desires both the pleasure of these experiences as well as their unsettling, who experiences meditations on diasporic belonging alongside pleasures of domination, and playfully experiments with these elements in an open world not quite of their own making.

Notes

1. Crytek, *Far Cry 4* (Montreuil Sous Bois: Ubisoft, 2014).
2. Crytek, *Crysis* (Redwood City, CA: Electronic Arts, 2007); Deep Silver, *Dead Island* ([S.I.]: Deep Silver, 2011).
3. *Just Cause 2* (El Segundo, CA: Square Enix, 2010).
4. Game studies owes a great debt to Alexander Galloway, Ian Bogost, Jesper Juul, and Gonzalo Frasca, who have been forerunners in debunking myths of play as simply juvenile.
5. I turn to Roland Barthes's *The Pleasure of the Text* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1975) to replace, as Susan Sontag has invoked, a hermeneutics of playing with an erotics of playing, one that accounts for the sensuality of gameplay.
6. Kuan-Hsing Chen, *Asia as Method: Toward Deimperialization* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), 18.
7. Frida Castillo, "Playing by the Rules: Applying International Humanitarian Law to Video and Computer Games," TRIAL, October 2009, 3, trialinternational.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Playing_by_the_Rule.pdf.
8. Ibid., 4.
9. David Leonard, "Live in Your World, Play in Ours: Race, Video Games, and Consuming the Other," *Studies in Media & Information Literacy Education* 3.4 (2003): 5.
10. Walden Bello, "Conclusion: From American Lake to a People's Pacific in the Twenty-First Century," in *Militarized Currents: Toward a Decolonized Future in Asia and the Pacific*, ed. Setsu Shigematsu and Keith L. Camacho (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), 314.
11. As Setsu Shigematsu and Keith L. Camacho have pointed out, contemporary militarism is less concerned with winning wars, as it speaks not for a single nation-state, but is "more fluid and permeable with civilian society" (Shigematsu and Camacho, "Introduction: Militarized Currents, Decolonizing Futures," in Shigematsu and Camacho, *Militarized Currents*, xxviii).
12. Patrick Crogan, quoted in Ian Bogost, "Pretty Hate Machines: A Review of Gameplay Mode," *Game Studies* 12.1 (2012), gamestudies.org/1201/articles/bogost_book_review.
13. Alexander R. Galloway, *Gaming: Essays on Algorithmic Culture* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), 71.
14. Peter Warren Singer, *Wired for War: The Robotics Revolution and Conflict in the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Penguin, 2009).
15. Ed Halter, *From Sun Tzu to Xbox: War and Video Games* (New York: Thunder's Mouth, 2006); Nick Turse, *The Complex: How the Military Invades Our Everyday Lives* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2008).
16. Marcus Schulzke, "Rethinking Military Gaming America's Army and Its Critics," *Games and Culture* 8.2 (2013): 59–76.
17. Nick Dyer-Witheford and Greig de Peuter, *Games of Empire: Global Capitalism and Video Games* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009), 8.
18. Phillips refers to the pictures from Abu Ghraib prison as an instance where military acts that are disrespectful toward human life have broached public discourse.

19. Amanda Phillips, "Shooting to Kill: Headshots, Twitch Reflexes, and the Mechropolitics of Video Games," *Games and Culture*, October 2015, 4.

20. Barthes, *Pleasure of the Text*, 18.

21. Ibid., 15.

22. Ibid., 19, 34.

23. bid., 14.

24. Georg Lauteren, "The Pleasure of the Playable Text: Towards an Aesthetic Theory of Computer Games," Computer Games and Digital Cultures Conference, 2002, www.digra.org/wp-content/uploads/digital-library/05164.55410.pdf, 221.

25. "Progression or Skill Tree Systems, the Type You . . ." Ask a Game Developer, November 14, 2014, askagamedev.tumblr.com/post/101776602061/progression-or-skill-tree-systems-the-type-you.

26. Ian Bogost, *Persuasive Games: The Expressive Power of Videogames* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2007), 16.

27. Nicole Lazzaro, "Why We Play Games: Four Keys to More Emotion without Story" (paper presented at XEODesign Game Developers Conference, San Jose, CA, 2004), www.xeodesign.com/xeodesign_whyweplaygames.pdf; Phillip D. Deen, "Interactivity, Inhabitation, and Pragmatist Aesthetics," *Game Studies* 11.2 (2011), gamestudies.org/1102/articles/deen.

28. Leslie Bow, "The Gendered Subject of Human Rights: Asian American Literature as Postcolonial Intervention," *Cultural Critique* 41 (1999): 38.

29. Bello, "Conclusion," 317.

30. Crytek, *Far Cry* (San Francisco, CA: Ubisoft, 2004).

31. Crytek, *Far Cry 2* (Montreuil Sous Bois: Ubisoft, 2008).

32. The TRIAL and Pro Juventute report lists *Far Cry 2* as a specific example of how games irresponsibly represent human rights abuse, citing a scene where the military junta attacks the player inside a church, a human rights abuse of "neutral grounds" that goes "unpunished" (Castillo, "Playing by the Rules," 29).

33. The player finds the Jackal's opinions in interview tapes made by Oluwagembi.

34. I follow Galloway's notion that game theorists do not see games as simply representing the world but as creating "correspondences" to it, through studying a game's "kinetic, affective and material dimensions" (Galloway, "Social Realism in Gaming," *Game Studies* 4.1 [2004], www.gamestudies.org/0401/galloway/).

35. Tom Bissell, *Extra Lives: Why Video Games Matter* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2010), 143.

36. Ibid.

37. The player can select from a number of mercenary protagonists, from the Sikh Mauritian, Quarbani Singh, to the Algerian ex–real estate broker, Hakim Echebbi.

38. Olli Tapio Leino, "Death Loop as a Feature," *Game Studies* 12.2 (2012), gamestudies.org/1202/articles/death_loop_as_a_feature.

39. Crytek, *Far Cry 3* (Montreuil Sous Bois: Ubisoft, 2012).

40. John Walker, "Far Cry 3's Jeffrey Yohalem on Racism, Torture, and Satire," *Rock Paper Shotgun*, December 19, 2012, www.rockpapershotgun.com/2012/12/19/far-cry-3s-jeffrey-yohalem-on-racism-torture-and-satire.

41. Promotional material for the game featured not the main white characters but Vaas, the main antagonist, whose voice actor, Michael Mando, often plays Hispanics in shows like *Better Call Saul*. Vaas seems to be the only native character to speak with such an accent, calling the protagonists "white boys," "California boy," and "hermano."

42. Walker, "Far Cry 3's Jeffrey Yohalem."

43. Ibid.

44. So-called serious games like September 12th explore this same issue of asking how much traumatic content the player will endure for the sake of repeating game loops.

45. As Dyer-Witheford and de Peuter have argued, gamers will practice forms of "digital dissent" toward games that are explicitly imperial or promilitary, like *America's Army* (*Games of Empire*, xiv).

46. Jesper Juul's *Casual Revolution* marks this shift from the gamer as white, young, and male to casual gamers who are older, and majority female (*A Casual Revolution: Reinventing Video Games and Their Players* [Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2010]).

47. Andrew Edney, "Talking about Far Cry Four with Creative Director Alex Hutchinson," *Huffington Post UK*, October 16, 2014, www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/andrew-edney/talking-about-far-cry-4-w_b_5987562.html.

48. See Jodi Kim, *Ends of Empire: Asian American Critique and the Cold War* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010); Jodi Melamed, *Represent and Destroy: Rationalizing Violence in the New Racial Capitalism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011); and Bow, "Gendered Subject of Human Rights."
49. Chen, *Asia as Method*, 165.
50. In the case of Taiwan, Chen shows how some political groups advocate for US imperial domination rather than mainland China's.
51. Clint Hocking, "Ludonarrative Dissonance in Bioshock," *Click Nothing*, October 7, 2007, clicknothing.typepad.com/click_nothing/2007/10/ludonarrative-d.html.
52. Jesper Juul, *Half-Real: Video Games between Real Rules and Fictional Worlds* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005), 141.
53. Ben Reeves, "To Nepal and Back: How Ubisoft Montreal Created a New Country for Far Cry 4," GameInformer, June 18, 2014, www.gameinformer.com/games/far_cry_4/b/playstation4/archive/2014/06/18/to-nepal-and-back-how-ubisoft-montreal-created-a-new-country-for-far-cry-4.aspx.
54. Ibid.
55. Ian Bogost, *Unit Operations: An Approach to Video Game Criticism* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006).
56. Barthes, *Pleasure of the Text*, 14.