

Virtual nonkilling spree

By [Debra Bendis](#)

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In
a [blog post](#) at the *Wall
Street Journal*, Conor

Dougherty describes a video game behavior that demonstrates what Century
writer Scott

Paeth [calls](#) "a distaste for playing evil."

According to Dougherty, gamers are finding ways to take some of the most
violent games and tweak characters or characters' behavior so that they
participate in the game with one notable difference--they don't kill.

When
gamers find a way to add a new dimension to a game, or to thwart its patterns,
they love to publicize their initiatives on YouTube. Nineteen-year-old Daniel
Mullins, for example, decided to use his imagination to "fight" the battle
template of *The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim*
by creating an odd hybrid character. [Felix the Peaceful Monk](#) (yes, half monk and
half cat)
rejects swords for "calm spells"; he also dons heavy armor and charges through
the assaults of his armed attackers.

One
small detail: yes, it's true that for gamers to find these alternative
behaviors, they must have been allowed for by the game designers in the first
place. Yet it's still encouraging to see imaginative energy put to work for the
purpose of foiling a violent pattern instead of chalking up kills.