

# **Review: 100 Best Video Games That Never Existed by Nate Crowley: Review by Allen Stroud**

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## Review: 100 Best Video Games That Never Existed by Nate Crowley

Some books fit into specific genres easily. Rebellion's coffee table publication of Crowley's fictitious list is one of those that announces its fantasy credentials right there on the title page but takes its contents seriously enough in tone to let the audience find the humour in the writing.

Crowley comes to this project with a reputation for wildly imaginative humour. Some people know him for his Twitter story, *Daniel Barker's Birthday*, or his Youtube satire of MMORPG's *Realm of Fightinge* or his alternative zombie novel, *The Death and Life of Schneider Wrack*. His writing has a tendency towards extravagance, tangents and comedic obsession. The short, two-page entry format of *100 Best Video Games* constrains his excesses within a specific word count and a writing frame.

This is the kind of book that you can dip in and out of, willing away some time while you wait for root canal work at the dentist, or picking up the dreaded mother-in-law from the train station. The point is, each entry takes you away from whatever bad place you may have found yourself in, to a twisted reincarnation of your video game playing past, where all the titles are kind of like what you remember, only with a twist. Within a page or two, you're laughing and really, that's the point.

Crowley's misspent youth is being put to good use creating fusions between games you owned and stupid real-life situations we all understand, with the occasional brand name thrown in for good measure. *Beastenders* and *Moulin Louge* immediately draw the eye, but what makes the ideas work are the way in which Crowley exploits them, conjuring images in your mind of games you wish you could have played. The writing expertly follows the populist magazine 'things' format, but delves deeper for its humour, letting you know we're laughing at list culture too.

Fans will probably pick up a few nods towards Crowley's previous work in some of the entries. *Realm of Fightinge* is an entry in the list and I'm sure Daniel Barker raised an eyebrow at the occasional mention of clowns and leopards. But, whether you know to spot these nods or not, it doesn't really matter. The humour includes you if you played video games in your youth from the 1980s to the 00s.