

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA

JOHN B. THOMPSON,

Plaintiff,

v.

Case No. 07-21256 (Judge Adalberto Jordan)

THE FLORIDA BAR and
DAVA J. TUNIS, JOHN HARKNESS,
AND FRANK ANTONES,

Defendants.

PLAINTIFF'S REQUEST FOR JUDICIAL NOTICE

COMES NOW petitioner, John B. Thompson, (Thompson) an attorney on his own behalf, and states:

As plaintiff was saying, re his request to appear before the Governors:

<http://blog.wired.com/games/2007/11/vgxpo-jack-tomp.html>

VGXPO: Jack Thompson vs. Lorne Lanning on Videogame Violence

By Susan Arendt  November 04, 2007 | 2:45:58 PM Categories: [Culture](#)



Two men took the stage at the VGXPO to debate the issue of violence in videogames. One was at various times snarky, belittling, pushing, and personal, and the other one was Jack Thompson.

The debate was a follow-up to a screening of Moral Kombat, Spencer Halpin's documentary about the various issues raised by violence and videogames. I watched the movie before the debate, and thought it was remarkably even-handed and fair about presenting both sides of the issue, though at times it was a bit silly, like when it superimposed Dean Takahashi's face on Mega Man.

Jack Thompson and Oddworld Inhabitants' Lorne Lanning were heavily featured in the documentary, presenting their points of view intelligently and eloquently, so I thought their upcoming debate would be quite a good show. But first I had to get through security.

The line to get into the debate wrapped along the wall, past the tables filled with Muslim DVDs, oils, and incense (there was a Muslim convention going on at the same time as the VGXPO), and around the corner. It seemed like everyone at the show knew this was going to be a Major Event, and they wanted to make sure they were there to witness it. As I chatted amiably with Chris Grant from [Joystiq](#) (who did a great job of liveblogging the action) and Dan Zuccarelli from [Bits, Bytes, Pixels and Sprites](#), one of Jack Thompson's bodyguards came out of the theater. He was dressed head to toe in black, from his sunglasses to his shoes, he was large, and most definitely in charge. He informed the crowd, in no uncertain terms, that he would not be putting up with any bullshit during this debate. We were to conduct ourselves like ladies and gentlemen, or he would damn well throw our asses out the door. Normally "throw you out" is a figure of speech, but there was no doubt in my mind that this guy meant it literally and was more than capable of making good on his promise. He seemed to be looking directly at the guy in the banana costume behind me as he was talking about his low tolerance for nonsense, but that have just been my imagination.

We were then given a handout that spelled out the code of conduct for the debate, which reiterated what the bodyguard had said, but in a less intimidating manner. No talking, no being a jackass. I started to get the impression that this was Serious Business. Then Bodyguard Number Two (also in black head to toe, but slightly less terrifying than Bodyguard Number One) told us that they would be searching our bags before we'd be allowed into the theater. My trip through airport security was a picnic compared to getting into this debate.

After our badges had been checked, our bags had been searched, and Bodyguard Number One had given us a look over the rims of his glasses that very clearly communicated his unwillingness to put up with any kind of bullshit whatsoever, we filed into the theater, where Jack Thompson was sitting to the left of moderator N'Gai Croal, with Lorne Lanning on the right.

Once everyone had a seat, N'Gai told us that there would be no photography of any kind. No cameras, no video, no camera phones, no camera pencils, nothing. Dan snapped the

quick pic you see at the start of this post with his phone, but there was no way I was about to try stealthing a pic with my camera. Not with Bodyguard Number One four steps away, anyway.

The debate began amicably enough, with Thompson and Lanning explaining how they came to be involved with Moral Kombat (they pretty much just answered the phone when Spencer called), and the inspiration for Oddworld (it's a metaphor for the rainforest). Things are going on in this very civil (but rather bland) fashion until Lanning put forth the idea that Thompson has turned himself into a brand by being the go-to guy for quotes about videogame violence. Lanning's point was that though the game industry has to pay for its airtime, Jack gets his for free by appearing on CNN or MSNBC or whatever other channel would like him to comment on the tie between videogames and whatever violent act has just occurred.

"And I thought this was going to be friendly," says Thompson.

Nope, sorry, Jack, friendly time is over. Lanning laid into Thompson for having a "business plan" that cashed in on the grief of victim's families, a point he would make throughout the rest of the debate. Thompson seemed both offended and confused by the suggestion, asking how exactly he was making money off his efforts, a point Lanning never really did answer.

At one point, Thompson said "no one in their right mind would say that a videogame by itself would turn an angel into a demon," but seemed to be splitting his message. At times, his message was about not letting retailers sell violent games to kids, at others it was that violent games make kids trained killers. His suggestion that developers should simply not ship their product to retail outlets that sell violent games to minors was particularly unrealistic.

In between directing snarky personal remarks (he took jabs at Thompson's faith and also that "he doesn't have to work for a living like I do, as a hard-working American") Lanning made rambling rants about the war in Iraq, how what's shown on news isn't really what's happening in the world, and how Bush isn't really President. He sounded more like Tim Robbins at the Oscars than someone debating whether or not playing Grand Theft Auto makes you more likely to shoot up a high school.

At the end of the debate, no questions had really been answered, and it seems unlikely that anyone's point of view had changed. Overall, it was an enthralling, if at times uncomfortable, display. Both Thompson and Lanning are extremely well-spoken men who feel quite strongly about their side of the issue and have clearly given it great thought.

What made me sad, though, was the way that the gaming community represented itself. Sure, we tend to disagree with Jack Thompson, his beliefs, and his tactics. We can all name any number of things that he's done to make us angry, but the bottom line is that he comported himself like a gentleman the entire time he was on that stage. He was gracious, humble, and polite, which is more than I can say for Lanning and most of the members of the audience who took part in the Q&A that followed the debate.

Lanning, at least, took just as many shots at the media in general as he did at Thompson personally, but the people asking questions pretty clearly just wanted to make Thompson look like a fool. They weren't there for intelligent discourse, they wanted their shot at telling Thompson he was a jackass. It's particularly regrettable because the people asking questions usually had good points to make, but the way they chose to make them was mocking and disrespectful. (There were one or two standouts who had no problem voicing their opinions without being jerks, including Amber from the PMS clan.) Think he's a loon all you want, I don't care, but the man was a guest in our house, and behaved himself accordingly. The least we could have done is been gracious hosts.

After the debate was over, Bodyguard Numbers One and Two put up a fast wall of You Aren't Getting Anywhere Near Here and hustled Thompson out of the building. I briefly introduced myself and thanked him for coming, when all it seemed that people wanted to do was rip him to pieces. He chuckled and said "Yeah. I could've stayed home for that."

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Then, may it please this court, there's what we can fairly call the **Steve Chaykin/Norm Kent Response** to Jack Thompson (terrorize what you choose to oppose) found today on the Internet in the aftermath of the above-reported debate:

by **xslayer91** - 16 hours ago

» **Idea!**

We should kill Jack Thompson and then blame it on videos games. It would be very ironic. I think?

[Reply](#) | [Hide Replies](#)

Re: lol(unregistered) - 15 hours

ago

» Idea

I think more than one person has already thought about this.

But then, who will freely advertise Rockstar video games in the future?

<http://mmorpg.qj.net/Jack-Thompson-Lorne-Lanning-debate-after-Moral-Kombat-screening/pg/49/aid/106851>

I hereby certify that the foregoing has been provided to opposing counsel through the court's electronic filing system, this November 5, 2007.

/s/ JOHN B. THOMPSON, Plaintiff
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