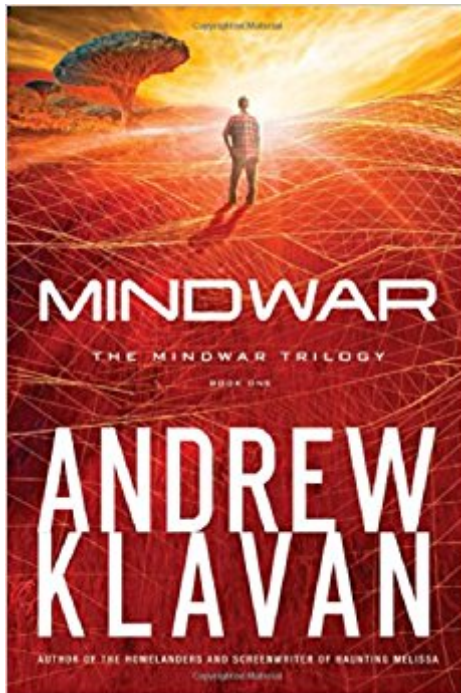


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# MindWar: A Novel (The MindWar Trilogy)



## Synopsis

When Rick lost the ability to run, he came one step closer to becoming a hero. New High Score! New Record Time! Rick nodded with grim satisfaction. He laid the game controller aside on the sofa and reached for his crutches. Rick Dial was the best quarterback Putnam Hills High School had ever seen. Unflappable. Unstoppable. Number 12. But when a car accident left him crippled, Rick's life as he knew it ended. He disavowed his triumphant past. He ignored his girlfriend. He disappeared into his bedroom and into the glowing video screen. But Rick's uncanny gaming skills have attracted attention. Dangerous attention. Government agents have uncovered a potentially devastating cyber-threat: a Russian genius has created a digital reality called the Realm, from which he can enter, control, and disrupt American computer systems . . . from transportation to defense. The agents want Rick, quick-thinking quarterback and gaming master, to enter the Realm and stop the madman before he sends America into chaos. Entering the Realm will give Rick what he thought he'd never have again: a body as strong and fast as it was before the accident. But this is no game, there are no extra lives, and what happens to Rick in the Realm happens to Rick's body in reality. Even after Rick agrees to help, he can't shake the sense that he's being kept in the dark. Why would a government agency act so aggressively? Can anyone inside the Realm be trusted? How many others have entered before him . . . and failed to return? In the tradition of Ender Game and The Matrix, MindWar is a complex thriller about a seemingly ordinary teenager who discovers a hidden gift—a gift that could make him a hero . . . or cost him everything. "Edgar Award-winning Klavan's well-orchestrated fantasy thriller features . . . an imaginative mix of gaming action with real-life stakes. With just the right cliff-hanger ending, this trilogy opener shows promise." Booklist

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Gr 8 Up • High School football star Rick Dial becomes depressed and immerses himself in video games after a car accident leaves his legs painfully useless. After racking up world-class high scores, the teen is recruited to fight real life baddies in The Realm • a virtual reality world created by Kurodar, a terrorist out to destroy the free world. Rick enters The Realm on several occasions, and each time the missions get more dangerous. He must fight for his life, because what happens to you in this virtual world affects your body in real life. Can Rick defeat Kurodar's evil Axis Assembly and save not only the country, but his family as well? The novel's overarching conservative and nationalistic themes turn this seemingly gamer-centric sci-fi novel into an exposition on forgiveness, faith, family, and patriotism. With quoted Bible passages and casual conversations with God, the author brings to the forefront the importance of religion in the protagonist's life. Sports commentary and video-game jargon are awkwardly integrated into the narrative. Recommended for athletes, young gamers, and readers looking for YA books with a Christian outlook. • Eden Rasette, Kenton County Public Library, KY

“Edgar Award-winning Klavan's well-orchestrated fantasy thriller features...an imaginative mix of gaming action with real-life stakes. With just the right cliff-hanger ending, this trilogy opener shows promise. (Booklist) Klavan (the Homelanders series) kicks off a trilogy with this fast-paced cyberthriller involving a teenager tapped by a secret agency to fight evil inside a form of virtual reality. Former football star Rick Dial has been living in a funk ever since his father walked out on his family and Rick himself was injured in a car accident. A self-described useless cripple, Rick has taken to playing video games nonstop. His exemplary skills lead him to be recruited by the MindWar Project, where he's charged with a vital mission: go into the digital Realm to investigate, spy on, and possibly combat the terrorist Kurodar. Inside the Realm, Rick fights code disguised as monsters as he learns how to achieve his full potential. While Rick starts out as depressed and surly, his self-image and confidence are gradually restored. The story, while interesting, suffers from a lack of focus---both an

awkward romantic subplot and religious undertones involving the power of spirit feel tacked on, rather than an organic part of the novel. (Publishers Weekly) “. . . the focus is on action, and there’s just enough left unresolved to tempt readers onward. (Kirkus Reviews)

Oh my gosh! Where do I even begin?!? This book was so good! Absolutely outstanding! First of all, great story, not too much detail, just enough to detail to get the idea what the author wants you to see, he keeps you wanting to keep turning the pages till the very end. Secondly, the character’s love interest wasn’t an annoying relationship, some people like to linger on it over and over again when the reader just wants the hero to do more hero work. Thirdly, if you’re considering to get the e-book of this book, you can get it for when it’s dark, I won’t judge you! But once you finish this book, you’ll want your own hard copy of this treasure and add it to your collection of heroic journeys. And fourthly, the action. The action was AWESOME!! It felt like I was standing right beside Rick as he fought the realm monsters!!! I can’t freaking wait till the next book!!!

Monsters, holograms and bad guys ... the West is being terrorized by a man who can cause train derailments with his mind. A young athlete, recently injured in a fateful car wreck must enter a virtual world to fight for the future of civilization. Written for young adults and Playstation addicts, it is fast-paced but falls flat for those of us who expect our evil-doers to look less like lizard men and flying demons and more like Robert Deniro with a 5 o’clock shadow and a cheap trench coat. I did like the clear line of demarcation between good and evil. A rare commodity in post-modern fiction.

For myself I’d probably give it 3.5/5, but I think a teen would like it more. Fast-moving, with a sympathetic hero and plenty of action. Were my nephews younger, maybe 12-16, I’d buy each of them a copy. (It seems to me likelier to appeal to boys than to girls.) My favorite passages are quieter moments when Rick struggles with anger and doubt. His fight to overcome them deepens the story. One absence bothered me: The Matrix and Avatar never cross Rick’s mind. They crossed mine more than once as I read. Maybe I’m showing my out-of-touch-ness; do kids still watch movies?

Great story. Fun characters. I feel like the book needed to be twice as long. I know that younger readers is the target audience but more information and back stories would have been great. Definitely recommend the book.

I can't wait for the next book. Mindwar is an intriguing idea. Imagine traveling into a video game. In the real world your a cripple, unable to walk without assistance, yet in the game you can walk and run. It feels and looks real. If you die in the game, you permanently go into a coma in the real world. Is the benefit worth the risk? For those who decided to take the risk the journey begins, however your mind is a fragile thing, spend too much time in the game and your mind will break from reality resulting in a permanent coma. Mindwar is an intense ride and I can't wait for the next two books of this trilogy. 5 Stars.

Another Klavan page-turner with eloquent prose, straight forward diction, complex characters, a deep & twisted plot, and everything else we have all come to know & expect out of an Andrew Klavan novel. Klavan is hands down my favorite fiction author. I wish more of his books would be made into movies, but Hollywood would probably blow it anyways. Ah well. This book is particularly of interest to me as I'm a bit of a gamer nerd, but then again so was the Homelander series since I'm a competitive martial artist. Klavan just knows how to captivate an audience as good as anyone I've read. I also had the pleasure to meet him and he is a genuine, articulate, thoughtful, bright, and standup guy...but if you've read any of his books or writings you would get a sense of that. Cheers to Klavan and Mindwar!

The whole story is a bit of a drag. Too much time is spent explaining things that are of little interest, and not enough time is spent explaining the Sci-Fi side of things in the Realm. If you've read any other books in the Sci-Fi category you will find yourself questioning the logic of many of the characters throughout the book. I did force myself to finish it though, so it can't be all bad. A good premise but I won't likely carry on with the series.

The trilogy is a worthy successor to Klavan's previous young people's fiction - the plot lines and characters develop and grow, surprises lurk around every corner, and though this is a cliché the books really are page turners; from the young disillusioned mind's first entry into an ugly mind, to the somewhat Potter-esque finish, a very fine work. I hope to see more from Klavan and to see these fine works rendered in visual media.

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