

# Classic characters return for 'Kombat' sequel

**"MORTAL KOMBAT: DEADLY ALLIANCE"**  
For GameCube, PlayStation2 and Xbox  
★★★★ out of ☆☆☆☆

BY BEN ANGSTADT  
THE GAMECOCK

"Mortal Kombat," the game that started the debate over video-game violence, is back once again.

We all remember the commercials from years ago, in which lone youths ran through the streets, simply crying the words, "Mortal Kombat!"

But now, mention the series to the average gamer, and the reaction is more like, "Mortal Kombat?" After a strong start followed by two weak showings in installments three and four, plus a pitiful venture with "Mortal Kombat Advance" for the Game Boy Advance this past year, a new "Mortal Kombat" hardly seems ex-

citing.

The story is simple: Series staple bad guy Shang Tsung is back from the Netherrealm, and has killed Liu Kang, the Earthrealm's greatest warrior. He's teamed up with newcomer Quan Chi, a sorcerer with a desire to conquer the world, and together they want to start a new Mortal Kombat tournament to eliminate the rest of the world's greatest warriors.

Thankfully, things are a bit different this time around. "Deadly Alliance" is the first game in the series to attempt a 3-D fighting arena, which is a nice change of pace. Additionally, each of the 12 fighters available at the beginning, plus the 12 unlockables, feature three distinct fighting styles that players can switch between during a match by simply pressing a button.

The multiple fighting styles are a much-needed touch of originality; the rest of "Deadly Alliance"

borrow heavily from its contemporaries: the combo-heavy game play of "Tekken," the weapons fighting of "Soul Calibur," the "realistic" female-body physics of "Dead or Alive," plus the level design of "Virtua Fighter."

Even with the game's copycat aspects, however, one thing sets "Deadly Alliance" apart: it's "Mortal Kombat." Most of the classic characters, such as Scorpion, Raiden, Sub-Zero and Jax, return. (But where are Goro and Baraka? Shameful.) Plus, all the fatalities that fired up U.S. Sen. Joe Lieberman so many years ago are back and as over the top as ever. The character designs are smooth and detailed, and the level designs are beautiful and varied, so the overall game-play looks better than ever, less a few buggy fighting animations.

"Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance" also includes an innovative system of unlocking extra

features and hidden characters. Credits are earned each time a match is won, and additional credits are earned through completing training missions, which actually gives the player some incentive to play through the training and learn the basics. These credits can be cashed in to retrieve one of the more than 650 bonuses.

Unfortunately, all is not perfect in the Earthrealm. Like all of its "Mortal Kombat" predecessors,

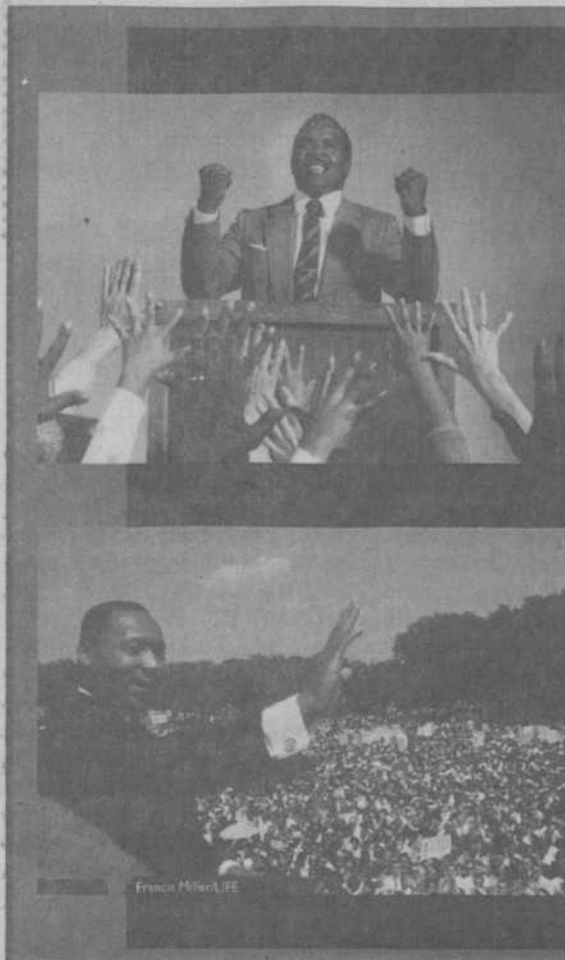
"Deadly Alliance" has a separate button for blocking, so players don't simply push back on the control stick like they do for every other fighting game in the world. This feels completely unnatural, and while this technique is hard to master, it is nearly impossible to win a match at the higher-difficulty levels without effectively blocking attacks.

The handful of awkward animations and the ridiculous diffi-

culty of some of the combos get annoying, but fortunately, even with these few shortcomings, "Deadly Alliance" still succeeds because of solid game play and the classic "Mortal Kombat" atmosphere.

So pull out the controllers and round up a few friends, because "Mortal Kombat" is back and better than ever.

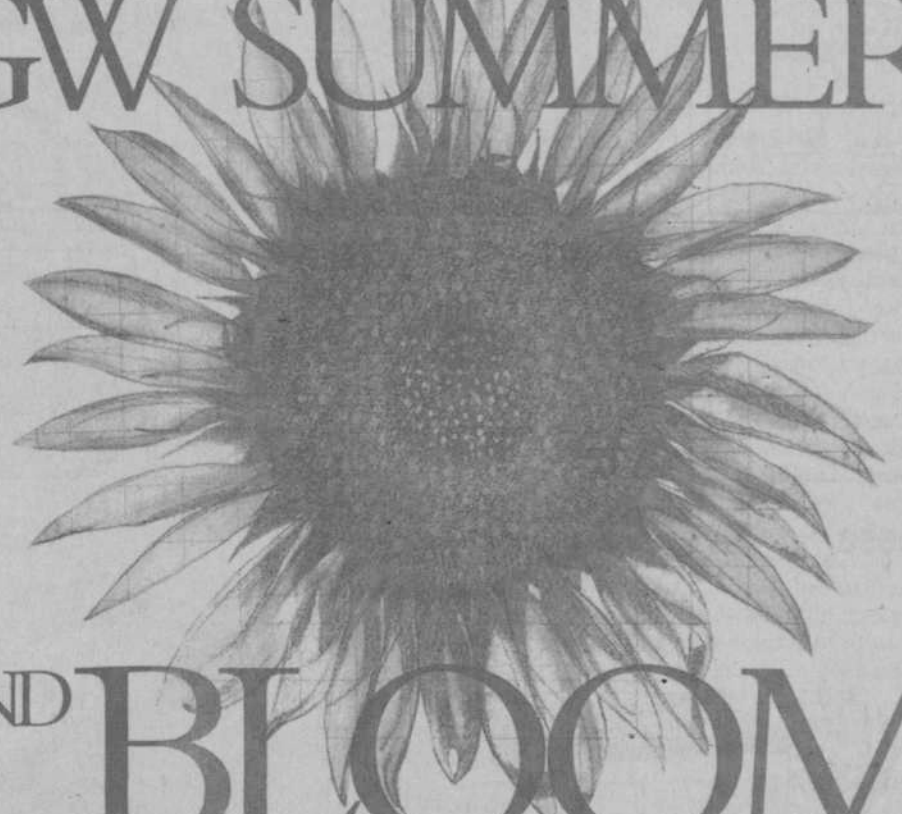
Comments on this story? E-mail gamecockmixeditor@hotmail.com



**Barry Scott:**  
a tribute to  
**Martin Luther King**  
Tuesday January 14, 2003  
At 8:00pm  
Russell House Ballroom

carolina PRODUCTIONS 777 7130 www.sc.edu/cp For more info.

# EXPERIENCE GW SUMMER AND BLOOM



Two Main Sessions: May 21 - July 2, 2003  
July 7 - August 15, 2003

Registration begins April 2003

www.summer.gwu.edu  
email: gwsummer@gwu.edu  
phone: 202.994.6360

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY  
WASHINGTON DC

GW is an equal opportunity institution.

# Late Night CAROLINA

Friday, December 6  
Russell House 2nd floor  
10pm-2am

**FREE BREAKFAST!**  
@ 1am

Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas @ 11pm

Free Gameroom

Holographic Keychains

Laser Tag

Caricatures by Ben Burgraff

Free Popcorn and Drinks

**ALL ACTIVITIES ARE FREE**  
Be sure to check in with your USC ID BEFORE MIDNIGHT

Be sure to catch next semester's Late Nights!  
January 31, February 28, March 21 and April 30

Paid for in part by student activity fees. Actual date, times and activities may change due to funding or programmatic decisions. For more information call 777-7130