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### Video Games

Social and psychological issues connected with video games are discussed.

### Future Gaming

A sophisticated critical take on contemporary game culture that reconsiders the boundaries between gamers and games. This book is not about the future of video games. It is not an attempt to predict the moods of the market, the changing profile of gamers, the benevolence or malevolence of the medium. This book is about those predictions. It is about the ways in which the past, present, and future notions of games are narrated and negotiated by a small group of producers, journalists, and gamers, and about how invested these narrators are in telling the story of tomorrow. This new title from Goldsmiths Press by Paolo Ruffino suggests the story could be told another way. Considering game culture, from the gamification of self-improvement to GamerGate's sexism and violence, Ruffino lays out an alternative, creative mode of thinking about the medium: a sophisticated critical take that blurs the distinctions among studying, playing, making, and living with video games. Offering a series of stories that provide alternative narratives of digital gaming, Ruffino aims to encourage all of us who study and play (with) games to raise ethical questions, both about our own role in shaping the objects of research, and about our involvement in the discourses we produce as gamers and scholars. For researchers and students seeking a fresh approach to game studies, and for anyone with an interest in breaking open the current locked-box discourse, Future Gaming offers a radical lens with which to view the future.

### Examining the Evolution of Gaming and Its Impact on Social, Cultural, and Political Perspectives

With complex stories and stunning visuals eliciting intense emotional responses, coupled with opportunities for self-expression and problem solving, video games are a powerful medium to foster empathy, critical thinking, and creativity in players. As these games grow in popularity, ambition, and

technological prowess, they become a legitimate art form, shedding old attitudes and misconceptions along the way. Examining the Evolution of Gaming and Its Impact on Social, Cultural, and Political Perspectives asks whether videogames have the power to transform a player and his or her beliefs from a sociopolitical perspective. Unlike traditional forms of storytelling, videogames allow users to immerse themselves in new worlds, situations, and politics. This publication surveys the landscape of videogames and analyzes the emergent gaming that shifts the definition and cultural effects of videogames. This book is a valuable resource to game designers and developers, sociologists, students of gaming, and researchers in relevant fields.

### The Video Game Theory Reader

In the early days of Pong and Pac Man, video games appeared to be little more than an idle pastime. Today, video games make up a multi-billion dollar industry that rivals television and film. The Video Game Theory Reader brings together exciting new work on the many ways video games are reshaping the face of entertainment and our relationship with technology. Drawing upon examples from widely popular games ranging from Space Invaders to Final Fantasy IX and Combat Flight Simulator 2, the contributors discuss the relationship between video games and other media; the shift from third- to first-person games; gamers and the gaming community; and the important sociological, cultural, industrial, and economic issues that surround gaming. The Video Game Theory Reader is the essential introduction to a fascinating and rapidly expanding new field of media studies.

### Social Exclusion, Power, and Video Game Play

While many books and articles are emerging on the new area of game studies and the application of computer games to learning, therapeutic, military, and entertainment environments, few have attempted to contextualize the importance of virtual play within a broader social, cultural, and political environment that raises the question of the significance of work, play, power, and inequalities in the modern world. Studies tend to concentrate on the content of virtual games, but few have questioned how power is produced or reproduced by publishers, gamers, or even social media; how social exclusion (based on race, class, or gender) in the virtual environment is reproduced from the real world; and how actors are able to use new media to transcend their fears, anxieties, prejudices, and assumptions. The articles presented by the contributors in this volume represent cutting-edge research in the area of critical game play with the hope of drawing attention to the need for more studies that are both sociological and critical.

### Videogames Studies: Concepts, Cultures, and Communication

This volume reflects the discussions that occurred during the 2nd Global Conference on Videogame Cultures and the Future of Interactive Entertainment in July 2010. The chapters in this volume cover four primary topics: new frameworks for game studies and analysis, the various cultures surrounding gaming, questions of ethics and controversial...

### Game Research Methods: An Overview

"Games are increasingly becoming the focus for research due to their cultural and economic impact on modern society. However, there are many different types of approaches and methods than can be applied to understanding games or those that play games. This book provides an introduction to various game research methods that are useful to students in all levels of higher education covering both quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods. In addition, approaches using game development for research is described. Each method is described in its own chapter by a researcher with practical experience of applying the method to topic of games. Through this, the book provides an overview of research methods that enable us to better our understanding on games."--Provided by publisher.

### The Performance of Video Games

When viewed through the context of an interactive play, a video game player fulfills the roles of both actor and spectator, watching and influencing a game's story in real time. This book presents video gaming as a virtual medium for performance, scrutinizing the ways in which a player's interaction with the narrative informs personal, historical, social and cultural understanding. Centering the author's own experiences as both video game player and performance scholar, the book thoroughly applies concepts from theatre and performance studies. Chapters argue that the posthuman player position

now challenges what can be contextualized as a lived experience, and how video games can change players' relationships with historical events and contemporary concerns, ultimately impacting how they develop a sense of self. Using the author's own gaming experiences as a framework, the book focuses on the intersection between player and narrative, exploring what engagement with a storyline reveals about identity and society.

### Independent Videogames

Independent Videogames investigates the social and cultural implications of contemporary forms of independent video game development. Through a series of case studies and theoretical investigations, it evaluates the significance of such a multi-faceted phenomenon within video game and digital cultures. A diverse team of scholars highlight the specificities of independence within the industry and the culture of digital gaming through case studies and theoretical questions. The chapters focus on labor, gender, distribution models and technologies of production to map the current state of research on independent game development. The authors also identify how the boundaries of independence are becoming opaque in the contemporary game industry – often at the cost of the claims of autonomy, freedom and emancipation that underlie the indie scene. The book ultimately imagines new and better narratives for a less exploitative and more inclusive videogame industry. Systematically mapping the current directions of a phenomenon that is becoming increasingly difficult to define and limit, this book will be a crucial resource for scholars and students of game studies, media history, media industries and independent gaming.

### Video Games and Well-being

This book examines how video game mechanics and narratives can teach players skills associated with increased psychological well-being. It integrates research from psychology, education, ludology, media studies, and communication science to demonstrate how game play can teach skills that have long been associated with increased happiness and prolonged life satisfaction, including flexible thinking, openness to experience, self-care, a growth mindset, solution-focused thinking, mindfulness, persistence, self-discovery and resilience. The chapters in this volume are written by leading voices in the field of game studies, including researchers from academia, the video gaming industry, and mental health practitioners paving the way in the field of “geek therapy.” This book will advance our understanding of the potential of video games to increase our psychological well-being by helping to mitigate depression, anxiety, and stress and foster persistence, self-care, and resilience.

### Videogames

"James Newman's lucid and engaging introduction guides the reader through the world of videogaming, providing a history of the videogame from its origins in the computer lab to its contemporary status as a global entertainment industry, with characters such as Lara Croft and Sonic the Hedgehog familiar even to those who've never been near a games console. Topics covered include: classifications, game theory and interactivity - what is a videogame? the videogame audience the videogame industry videogame structure narratives and play- approaches to the study of videogames videogames, avatars and virtual worlds social gaming and the culture of videogames This second edition updates the book to include recent developments such as: the popularity of the wii and the increase in non-traditional gamers and more physical gaming the development of MMOGs (massively multiplayer online games) such as World of Warcraft games being downloaded as apps or accessed via mobile phones, iPods and social networking sites"--

### Worlds in Play

Worlds in Play, a map of the «state of play» in digital games research today, illustrates the great variety and extreme contrasts in the landscape cleft by contemporary digital games research. The chapters in this volume are the work of an international review board of seventy game-study specialists from fields spanning social sciences, arts, and humanities to the physical and applied sciences and technologies. A wellspring of inspiring concepts, models, protocols, data, methods, tools, critical perspectives, and directions for future work, Worlds in Play will support and assist in reading not only within, but across fields of play - disciplinary, temporal, and geographical - and encourage all of us to widen our focus to encompass the omni-dimensional phenomenon of «worlds in play.»

### Tomb Raiders and Space Invaders

The first in the field to focus on the key aspects of videogames themselves as a distinctive medium, this is a rich and original read for gamers as well as students and researchers of popular culture internationally, which reviews the passionate gamer/game relationship viz all types of games from "Doom" to "EverQuest". Videogames now rival Hollywood cinema in popularity and profits and there are huge followings for titles such as "Tomb Raider" or "The Sims". Exactly what games offer, however, as a distinct form of entertainment, has received scant attention. This book is a valuable contribution to this new field. Its main focus is on key formal aspects of games and the experiences and pleasures offered by the activities they require of the player. A wide range of games are considered, from first-person shooters to third-person action-adventures, strategy, sports-related and role-playing games. Issues examined in detail include the characteristics of gameplay and its relationship with narrative, genre, virtual landscapes, realism, spectacle and sensation. Lively and accessible in style, this book is written for both an academic readership and the wider audience of gamers and those interested in popular culture.

#### Before the Crash

Contributors examine the early days of video game history before the industry crash of 1983 that ended the medium's golden age.

#### The Evolution and Social Impact of Video Game Economics

Today, consumers of video games spend over \$22.4 billion each year; using more complex and multi-layered strategies, game developers attempt to extend the profitability of their products from a simple one-time sale, to continuous engagement with the consumer. The Evolution and Social Impact of Video Game Economics examines paradigmatic changes in the economic structure of the video game industry from a media effects and game design perspective. This book explores how game developers have changed how they engage players in order to facilitate continuous financial transactions. Contributors look from the advent of microtransactions and downloadable content (DLCs) to the impact of planned obsolescence, impulse buying, and emotional control. This collection takes a broad view of the game dynamics and market forces that drive the video game industry, and features international contributors from Asia, Europe, and Australia.

#### The Video Game Industry

The Video Game Industry provides a platform for the research on the video game industry to draw a coherent and informative picture of this industry. Previously this has been done sparsely through conference papers, research articles, and popular science books. Although the study of this industry is still stigmatized as frivolous and 'only' game oriented, those who grew up with video games are changing things, especially research agendas, the acceptance of studies, and their interpretation. This book describes and defines video games as their own special medium. They are not pinball from which they grew, nor movies which they sometimes resemble. They are a unique form of entertainment based on meaningful interactions between individuals and machine across a growing sector of the population. The Video Game Industry provides a reference foundation for individuals seriously interested in the industry at the academic level. As a result, this book will serve as a reference in curricula associated with video game development for years to come.

#### The Video Games Textbook

The Video Games Textbook takes the history of video games to another level, with visually-stimulating, comprehensive, and chronological chapters that are relevant and easy to read for a variety of students. Every chapter is a journey into a different era or area of gaming, where readers emerge with a strong sense of how video games evolved, why they succeeded or failed, and the impact they had on the industry and human culture. Written to capture the attention and interest of both domestic and international college students, each chapter contains a list of objectives and key terms, illustrative timelines, arcade summaries, images and technical specifications of all major consoles.

#### Racing the Beam

A study of the relationship between platform and creative expression in the Atari VCS, the gaming system for popular games like Pac-Man and Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back. The Atari Video Computer System dominated the home video game market so completely that "Atari" became the generic

term for a video game console. The Atari VCS was affordable and offered the flexibility of changeable cartridges. Nearly a thousand of these were created, the most significant of which established new techniques, mechanics, and even entire genres. This book offers a detailed and accessible study of this influential video game console from both computational and cultural perspectives. Studies of digital media have rarely investigated platforms—the systems underlying computing. This book, the first in a series of Platform Studies, does so, developing a critical approach that examines the relationship between platforms and creative expression. Nick Montfort and Ian Bogost discuss the Atari VCS itself and examine in detail six game cartridges: *Combat*, *Adventure*, *Pac-Man*, *Yars' Revenge*, *Pitfall!*, and *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back*. They describe the technical constraints and affordances of the system and track developments in programming, gameplay, interface, and aesthetics. *Adventure*, for example, was the first game to represent a virtual space larger than the screen (anticipating the boundless virtual spaces of such later games as *World of Warcraft* and *Grand Theft Auto*), by allowing the player to walk off one side into another space; and *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back* was an early instance of interaction between media properties and video games. Montfort and Bogost show that the Atari VCS—often considered merely a retro fetish object—is an essential part of the history of video games.

### What Is a Game?

What is a videogame? What makes a videogame "good"? If a game is supposed to be fun, can it be fun without a good story? If another is supposed to be an accurate simulation, does it still need to be entertaining? With the ever-expanding explosion of new videogames and new developments in the gaming world, questions about videogame criticism are becoming more complex. The differing definitions that players and critics use to decide what a game is and what makes a game successful, often lead to different ideas of how games succeed or fail. This collection of new essays puts on display the variety and ambiguity of videogames. Each essay is a work of game criticism that takes a different approach to defining the game and analyzing it. Through analysis and critical methods, these essays discuss whether a game is defined by its rules, its narrative, its technology, or by the activity of playing it, and the tensions between these definitions. With essays on *Overwatch*, *Dark Souls 3*, *Far Cry 4*, *Farmville* and more, this collection attempts to show the complex changes, challenges and advances to game criticism in the era of videogames.

### The World of Scary Video Games

As for film and literature, the horror genre has been very popular in the video game. *The World of Scary Video Games* provides a comprehensive overview of the videoludic horror, dealing with the games labelled as "survival horror" as well as the mainstream and independent works associated with the genre. It examines the ways in which video games have elicited horror, terror and fear since *Haunted House* (1981). Bernard Perron combines an historical account with a theoretical approach in order to offer a broad history of the genre, outline its formal singularities and explore its principal issues. It studies the most important games and game series, from *Haunted House* (1981) to *Alone in the Dark* (1992- ), *Resident Evil* (1996-present), *Silent Hill* (1999-present), *Fatal Frame* (2001-present), *Dead Space* (2008-2013), *Amnesia: the Dark Descent* (2010), and *The Evil Within* (2014). Accessibly written, *The World of Scary Video Games* helps the reader to trace the history of an important genre of the video game.

### Video Games and Creativity

Video games have become an increasingly ubiquitous part of society due to the proliferation and use of mobile devices. *Video Games and Creativity* explores research on the relationship between video games and creativity with regard to play, learning, and game design. It answers such questions as: Can video games be used to develop or enhance creativity? Is there a place for video games in the classroom? What types of creativity are needed to develop video games? While video games can be sources of entertainment, the role of video games in the classroom has emerged as an important component of improving the education system. The research and development of game-based learning has revealed the power of using games to teach and promote learning. In parallel, the role and importance of creativity in everyday life has been identified as a requisite skill for success. Summarizes research relating to creativity and video games Incorporates creativity research on both game design and game play Discusses physical design, game mechanics, coding, and more Investigates how video

games may encourage creative problem solving Highlights applications of video games for educational purposes

### Real Games

How we talk about games as real or not-real, and how that shapes what games are made and who is invited to play them. In videogame criticism, the worst insult might be "That's not a real game!" For example, "That's not a real game, it's on Facebook!" and "That's not a real game, it's a walking simulator!" But how do people judge what is a real game and what is not—what features establish a game's gameness? In this engaging book, Mia Consalvo and Christopher Paul examine the debates about the realness or not-realness of videogames and find that these discussions shape what games get made and who is invited to play them. Consalvo and Paul look at three main areas often viewed as determining a game's legitimacy: the game's pedigree (its developer), the content of the game itself, and the game's payment structure. They find, among other things, that even developers with a track record are viewed with suspicion if their games are on suspect platforms. They investigate game elements that are potentially troublesome for a game's gameness, including genres, visual aesthetics, platform, and perceived difficulty. And they explore payment models, particularly free-to-play—held by some to be a marker of illegitimacy. Finally, they examine the debate around such so-called walking simulators as *Dear Esther* and *Gone Home*. And finally, they consider what purpose is served by labeling certain games "real."

### Metagames

*Metagames: Games about Games* scrutinizes how various meta devices, such as breaking the fourth wall and unreliable narrator, change and adapt when translated into the uniquely interactive medium of digital games. Through its theoretical analyses and case studies, the book shows how metafictional experimentation can be used to both challenge and push the boundaries of what a game is and what a player's role is in play, and to raise more profound topics such as those describing experiences of people of oppressed identities. The book is divided into six chapters that deal with the following meta devices: breaking the fourth wall, hypermediation, unreliable narrator, abusive game design, fragmentation, and parody. The book will predominantly interest scholars and students of media studies and game studies as it continues discourses held in the discipline regarding the metareferential character of digital games.

### Player and Avatar

Do you make small leaps in your chair while attempting challenging jumps in *Tomb Raider*? Do you say "Ouch!" when a giant hits you with a club in *Skyrim*? Have you had dreams of being inside the underwater city of Rapture? Videogames cast the player as protagonist in an unfolding narrative. Like actors in front of a camera, gamers' proprioception, or body awareness, can extend to onscreen characters, thus placing them "physically" within the virtual world. Players may even identify with characters' ideological motivations. The author explores concepts central to the design and enjoyment of videogames--affect, immersion, liveness, presence, agency, narrative, ideology and the player's virtual surrogate: the avatar. Gamer and avatar are analyzed as a cybernetic coupling that suggests fulfillment of Antonin Artaud's vision of the "body without organs."

### An Introduction to Game Studies

*An Introduction to Game Studies* is the first introductory textbook for students of game studies. It provides a conceptual overview of the cultural, social and economic significance of computer and video games and traces the history of game culture and the emergence of game studies as a field of research. Key concepts and theories are illustrated with discussion of games taken from different historical phases of game culture. Progressing from the simple, yet engaging gameplay of *Pong* and text-based adventure games to the complex virtual worlds of contemporary online games, the book guides students towards analytical appreciation and critical engagement with gaming and game studies. Students will learn to: - Understand and analyse different aspects of phenomena we recognise as 'game' and 'play' - Identify the key developments in digital game design through discussion of action in games of the 1970s, fiction and adventure in games of the 1980s, three-dimensionality in games of the 1990s, and social aspects of gameplay in contemporary online games - Understand games as dynamic systems of meaning-making - Interpret the context of games as 'culture' and subculture - Analyse the relationship between technology and interactivity and between 'game' and 'reality' - Situate games within the context of digital culture and the information society With further reading suggestions,

images, exercises, online resources and a whole chapter devoted to preparing students to do their own game studies project, *An Introduction to Game Studies* is the complete toolkit for all students pursuing the study of games. The companion website at [www.sagepub.co.uk/mayra](http://www.sagepub.co.uk/mayra) contains slides and assignments that are suitable for self-study as well as for classroom use. Students will also benefit from online resources at [www.gamestudiesbook.net](http://www.gamestudiesbook.net), which will be regularly blogged and updated by the author. Professor Frans Mäyrä is a Professor of Games Studies and Digital Culture at the Hypermedia Laboratory in the University of Tampere, Finland.

### Computer Games

Computer games are one of the most exciting and rapidly evolving media of our time. Revenues from console and computer games have now overtaken those from Hollywood movies; and online gaming is one of the fastest-growing areas of the internet. Games are no longer just kids' stuff: the majority of players are now adults, and the market is constantly broadening. The visual style of games has become increasingly sophisticated, and the complexities of game-play are ever more challenging. Meanwhile, the iconography and generic forms of games are increasingly influencing a whole range of other media, from films and television to books and toys. This book provides a systematic, comprehensive introduction to the analysis of computer and video games. It introduces key concepts and approaches drawn from literary, film and media theory in an accessible and concrete manner; and it tests their use and relevance by applying them to a small but representative selection of role-playing and action-adventure games. It combines methods of textual analysis and audience research, showing how the combination of such methods can give a more complete picture of these playable texts and the fan cultures they generate. Clearly written and engaging, it will be a key text for students in the field and for all those with an interest in taking games seriously.

### Every Game is an Island

Despite the pervasive rhetorics of immersion and embodiment found in industrial and social discourses, playing a video game is an exercise in non-linearity. The pervasiveness of trial and error mechanics, unforgiving game over screens, loading times, minute tweakings of options and settings, should lead us to consider video games as a medium that cannot eschew fragmentation. *Every Game is an Island* is an analysis and a critique of grey areas, dead ends and extremities found in digital games, an exploration of border zones where play and non-play coexist or compete. Riccardo Fassone describes the complexity of the experience of video game play and brings integral but often overlooked components of the gameplay experience to the fore, in an attempt to problematize a reading of video games as grandiosely immersive, all-encompassing narrative experiences. Through the analysis of closures and endings, limits and borders, and liminal states, this field-advancing study looks at the heart of a medium starting from its periphery.

### Storytelling in Video Games

Beginning with the structural features of design and play, this book explores video games as both compelling examples of story-telling and important cultural artifacts. The author analyzes fundamentals like immersion, world building and player agency and their role in crafting narratives in the *Mass Effect* series, *BioShock*, *The Last of Us*, *Fallout 4* and many more. The text-focused “visual novel” genre is discussed as a form of interactive fiction.

### Integrating Video Game Research and Practice in Library and Information Science

Video games are now a ubiquitous form of media used by the majority of the American population. However, the academic research field surrounding this genre does not accurately reflect the pervasive influence of video games. The field of library and information sciences helps provide the necessary foundational support for this media. *Integrating Video Game Research and Practice in Library and Information Science* brings together video gaming culture and its unique forms of communication with information behavior research. By detailing the nuances of video games and their influence, this reference book reveals communication patterns within society and provides comprehensive background and analysis for libraries, librarians, and information professionals.

### Games and Gaming

The computer games industry has rapidly matured. Once a preoccupation only of young technophiles, games are now one of the dominant forms of global popular culture. From consoles such as Nintendo Wii and Microsoft's Xbox, to platforms such as iPhones and online gaming worlds, the realm of games and their scope have become all-pervasive. The study of games is no longer a niche interest but rather an integral part of cultural and media studies. The analysis of games reveals much about contemporary social relations, online communities and media engagement. Presenting a range of approaches and analytical tools through which to explore the role of games in everyday life, and packed with case material, *Games and Gaming* provides a comprehensive overview of this new media and how it permeates global culture in the twenty-first century.

### Understanding Video Games

*Understanding Video Games* is a crucial guide for newcomers to video game studies and experienced game scholars alike. This revised and updated third edition of the pioneering text provides a comprehensive introduction to the field of game studies, and highlights changes in the gaming industry, advances in video game scholarship, and recent trends in game design and development—including mobile, casual, educational, and indie gaming. In the third edition of this textbook, students will: Learn the major theories and schools of thought used to study games, including ludology and narratology; Understand the commercial and organizational aspects of the game industry; Trace the history of games, from the board games of ancient Egypt to the rise of mobile gaming; Explore the aesthetics of game design, including rules, graphics, audio, and time; Analyze the narrative strategies and genre approaches used in video games; Consider the debate surrounding the effects of violent video games and the impact of "serious games." Featuring discussion questions, recommended games, a glossary of key terms, and an interactive online video game history timeline, *Understanding Video Games* provides a valuable resource for anyone interested in examining the ways video games are reshaping entertainment and society.

### The Video Game Debate 2

This student-friendly book provides an accessible overview of the primary debates about the effects of video games. It expands on the original *The Video Game Debate* to address the new technologies that have emerged within the field of game studies over the last few years. Debates about the negative effects of video game play have been evident since their introduction in the 1970s, but the advent of online and mobile gaming has revived these concerns, reinvigorating old debates and generating brand new ones. *The Video Game Debate 2* draws from the latest research findings from the top scholars of digital games research to address these concerns. The book explores key developments such as virtual and augmented reality, the use of micro-transactions, the integration of loot boxes, and the growth of mobile gaming and games for change (serious games). Furthermore, several new chapters explore contemporary debates around e-sports, gamification, sex and gender discrimination in games, and the use of games in therapy. This book offers students and scholars of games studies and digital media, as well as policymakers, the essential information they need to participate in the debate.

### A Play of Bodies

An investigation of the embodied engagement between the playing body and the videogame: how player and game incorporate each other. Our bodies engage with videogames in complex and fascinating ways. Through an entanglement of eyes-on-screens, ears-at-speakers, and muscles-against-interfaces, we experience games with our senses. But, as Brendan Keogh argues in *A Play of Bodies*, this corporal engagement goes both ways; as we touch the videogame, it touches back, augmenting the very senses with which we perceive. Keogh investigates this merging of actual and virtual bodies and worlds, asking how our embodied sense of perception constitutes, and becomes constituted by, the phenomenon of videogame play. In short, how do we perceive videogames? Keogh works toward formulating a phenomenology of videogame experience, focusing on what happens in the embodied engagement between the playing body and the videogame, and anchoring his analysis in an eclectic series of games that range from mainstream to niche titles. Considering smartphone videogames, he proposes a notion of co-attentiveness to understand how players can feel present in a virtual world without forgetting that they are touching a screen in the actual world. He discusses the somatic basis of videogame play, whether games involve vigorous physical movement or quietly sitting on a couch with a controller; the sometimes overlooked visual and audible pleasures of videogame experience; and modes of temporality represented by character death, failure, and repetition. Finally, he considers



two metaphorical characters: the “hacker,” representing the hegemonic, masculine gamers concerned with control and configuration; and the “cyborg,” less concerned with control than with embodiment and incorporation.

### On Soulsring Worlds

The first book-length study devoted to FromSoftware games, *On Soulsring Worlds* explores how the Dark Souls series and Elden Ring are able to reconcile extreme difficulty in both gameplay and narrative with broad appeal. Arguing that the games are strategically positioned in relation to contemporary audiences and designed to tap into the new forms of interpretation afforded by digital media, the author situates the games vis-à-vis a number of current debates, including the posthuman and the ethics of gameplay. The book delivers an object lesson on the value of narrative (and) complexity in digital play and in the interpretive practices it gives rise to. Cross-fertilizing narrative theory, game studies, and nonhuman-oriented philosophy, this book will appeal to students and scholars of game studies, media studies, narratology, and video game ethnography.

### Dungeons, Dragons, and Digital Denizens

*Dungeons, Dragons, and Digital Denizens* is a collection of scholarly essays that seeks to represent the far-reaching scope and implications of digital role-playing games as both cultural and academic artifacts. As a genre, digital role playing games have undergone constant and radical revision, pushing not only multiple boundaries of game development, but also the playing strategies and experiences of players. Divided into three distinct sections, this premiere volume captures the distinctiveness of different game types, the forms of play they engender and their social and cultural implications. Contributors examine a range of games, from classics like Final Fantasy to blockbusters like World of Warcraft to obscure genre bending titles like Lux Pain. Working from a broad range of disciplines such as ecocriticism, rhetoric, performance, gender, and communication, these essays yield insights that enrich the field of game studies and further illuminate the cultural, psychological and philosophical implications of a society that increasingly produces, plays and discourses about role playing games.

### Introduction to Game Analysis

Game analysis allows us to understand games better, providing insight into the player-game relationship, the construction of the game, and its sociocultural relevance. As the field of game studies grows, videogame writing is evolving from the mere evaluation of gameplay, graphics, sound, and replayability, to more reflective writing that manages to convey the complexity of a game and the way it is played in a cultural context. *Introduction to Game Analysis* serves as an accessible guide to analyzing games using strategies borrowed from textual analysis. Clara Fernández-Vara's concise primer provides instruction on the basic building blocks of game analysis—examination of context, content and reception, and formal qualities—as well as the vocabulary necessary for talking about videogames' distinguishing characteristics. Examples are drawn from a range of games, both digital and non-digital—from Bioshock and World of Warcraft to Monopoly—and the book provides a variety of exercises and sample analyses, as well as a comprehensive ludography and glossary.

### The Business and Culture of Digital Games

This book explores the lifecycle of digital games. Drawing upon a broad range of media studies perspectives with aspects of sociology, social theory and economics, Aphra Kerr explores this all-pervasive, but under-theorised, aspect of our media environment. Written as an introductory text for media and game students this book aims present an overview of industry and scholarly work on who makes games, where they get made, what kind of media and cultural form they are and who plays them and where. *The Business and Culture of Digital Games* looks at: - games as a new media form; - the design, development and marketing of games; - the use of games in public and private spaces. Combining a theoretical and empirical analysis of the production, content and consumption of computer games, this book will be of interest to many students of media, culture and communication.

### The History of Video Games

The growth in popularity and complexity of video games has spurred new interest in how games are developed and in the research and technology behind them. David Heineman brings together some of the most iconic, influential, and interesting voices from across the gaming industry and asks them to

weigh in on the past, present, and future of video games. Among them are legendary game designers Nolan Bushnell (Pong) and Eugene Jarvis (Defender), who talk about their history of innovations from the earliest days of the video game industry through to the present; contemporary trailblazers Kellee Santiago (Journey) and Casey Hudson (Mass Effect), who discuss contemporary relationships between those who create games and those who play them; and scholars Ian Bogost (How to Do Things With Videogames) and Edward Castronova (Exodus to the Virtual World), who discuss how to research and write about games in ways that engage a range of audiences. These experts and others offer fascinating perspectives on video games, game studies, gaming culture, and the game industry more broadly.

### Thinking about Video Games

"This study sketches some of the various trajectories of digital games in modern Western societies, looking at the growth and persistence of the moral panic that continues to accompany massive public interest in digital games. The book continues with a new phase of games research exemplified by systematic examination of specific aspects of digital games and gaming"--Provided by publisher.

### The Players' Realm