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Replay: The History Of Video Games



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Synopsis

A riveting account of the birth and remarkable evolution of the most important development in entertainment since television, Replay is the ultimate history of video games. From its origins in the research labs of the 1940s to the groundbreaking success of the Wii, Replay sheds new light on gaming's past. Along the way it takes in the spectacular rise and fall of Atari, the crazed cottage industry spawned by the computers of Sir Clive Sinclair, Japan's rapid ascent to the top of the gaming tree, and the seismic impact of Doom. Replay tells the sensational story of how the creative vision of game designers across the globe gave rise to one of the world's most popular and dynamic art forms. Based on extensive research and more than 140 interviews, Replay includes insights from video game legends such as Atari founder Nolan Bushnell, Will Wright - the creator of The Sims , Doom designer John Romero, and Hironobu Sakaguchi of Final Fantasy fame. Replay also includes a foreword by Richard Garriott (AKA Lord British).

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Replay: The History of Video Games does very little to convince you that you need to buy it: its cover is unattractive, to say the least, and should you decide to casually browse it in the shop, youÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ll be confronted with nothing but a massive wall of small-font text with the occasional black and white picture of people you probably wonÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t recognize. In short, this is one book that will never make the acquaintance of a coffee table.And yet, itÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s an absolutely essential read for anyone that wants to broaden his/her understanding of video games, and how they came to become what they are. Not only is it hands

down the most interesting book IÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ve read on the subject, itÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s also one of my favorite non-fiction books of all time. A clear example of substance over style, if there ever was one.Chronicling 40+ years of video game history will never be done comprehensively, even in 400 pages of dense text. But Replay is certainly the most convincing attempt at covering everything of importance. And it doesn't compromise on the width to achieve its remarkable depth. It's a history of video games, but it's also a history of the people who create them, of the hardware they run on, of the companies that make them their business, of the economic issues they had to face and of the social debates that games have raised. It gives balanced attention to the arcade and the home games. Even more remarkable, Replay is a true worldwide history, covering people and events in all the places that ever mattered for the hobby: the USA, Japan, Europe (the UK, of course, but you might be surprised to learn exactly how much happened in Spain, France or Eastern European countries), Russia... There's even a whole chapter dedicated to the very peculiar history of video games in South Korea. Very, very little bases are left uncovered.The early history is told in an essentially chronological manner. It may be the most fascinating part of the book: it's an era of heroic deeds by individuals, or small groups, who single-handedly created games and/or game machines with the reluctant agreement of companies that believed so little in the projects that they only allocated pennies to them. An era of teenage boys creating both complex and surreal worlds in their basements, and then squeezing them into the very few kilobytes of memory available on the early home computers. If you're a younger video game player, this part will probably make you wish you were born sooner!More recent times have seen the rise of bigger studios, with big-budget games rarey associated with a single creative mind, and the release of hundreds, if not thousands of games each year, render the chronological approach impractical. That's why Tristan Donovan logically switches to a more theme-centric discussion. Chapters in the second half of the book tend indeed to each focus on a couple of themes. At first, these themes appear unrelated, but he nonetheless always comes up with an elegant transition. Finally, the last chapter covers the rise of indie video games and we go sort of full circle, back to visionaries making the most of limited means. It has to be said that, being published in 2010, you wonÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t get coverage of the last three years.Going back to the stylistic aspects, Donovan's writing is elegant and enjoyable. Many quotes from hundreds of interviews are interspersed within his narration, making the people come alive in the reader's mind. My one and only complaint with the book would be the rare but annoying grammatical errors. I'm talking about horrible, "could of been"-style errors that one can expect to find in a teenager's Facebook wall, but certainly not in an otherwise excellent history text.Two large annexes close the book. The first is a "gameography", listing some 600 games by

genre, with short comments. Many of those have already been discussed in the main text, but the annex's interest lies in its organisation: it's a sort of evolutionary tree, explaining, for example, when fighting games got split into the beat-em-up's and one-on-one fighting subgenres. The second annex lists all systems discussed in the text, with a definition in one or two sentences. It may occasionally come in handy, but is little more than a glossary.Overall, Replay is about as perfect as a history of video games can be. It's pleasingly written and entertaining enough for the general public who would like to know more about the hobby. It's also deep and rigorous enough to satisfy the more scholarly-minded reader. In short, it's an essential read for most everyone.

While by no means a comprehensive history, this offers some a nice chronology and many interesting tales about the birth and maturity of gaming.The best asset is that it's not Americentric, and offers a great history of the European market, in particular. I found the details about the European hardware market, along with the history of European software developers (French Adventure gaming, for example) fascinating. Much of the European stuff was completely new material to me. The descriptions of the type of innovation or idiosyncrasies each nation tended to bring to gaming was also fascinating, since it shows how the different cultures contributed along the way.Finally, for something being published in 2010, the book ends abruptly in the early 1990's. It's kind of jarring, because there are a lot of pages left and stories to tell. Unfortunately, the last 200+ (of 500 some) pages are not-very-interesting mind map of games and the hardware to play them. It's a shame, because two or three more chapters would have really rounded the book out.Still, video games are embedded into our culture and there is room for many accounts of the first 50 years of this nascent art. This is definitely a worthwhile read, but probably not the ideal choice for someone looking for the 'comprehensive history' condensed into one book.

This title has been a great help for my investigative paper required by my BFA. Donovan documents more about video games than just the tech or the reviews, there is a deeper level of social and artistic observation. Every so often a quirk of humor is noticeable that keeps the read refreshing.

And did I ever get what I paid for. This is extremely well researched, and well-written. It's written in a more casual tone, as if it was someone really knowledgeable on the subject talking to you over lunch. It talks about scandals, things companies wouldn't really talk about, the highlights of each generation, the goods, the bads, actual accounts of real people, I literally was only looking for the Nintendo portions, but ended up reading more than I was planning on because of how well put

together this was.If you’re interested in the history of Video Games, or just a gamer in general curious for facts Wikipedia doesn’t have, I’d definitely invest in buying this book. It blew my expectations out of the water, and the Table of Contents is really well done- it literally has each section listed and is there for those "I want to see what SEGA was about" and boom, you can read about SEGA right there.Great Purchase, great reference, great buy.

wow what an excellent book. it drags a bit at the beginning but that’s just me. i like 1979 and forward is all.

Great Products ... Great Shipping ... Great Seller . A+++++

This is a longer version of "All your bases are belong to us" book. it deals about great detail from the DARPA lab inventing the first video game (yes, the DoD funded the first one), up to today’s gaming. 430 pages of knowledge, to appreciate your grandfather’s generation for inventing the most valuable business in the entertainment sector today. After reading this book, you will appreciate games more than ever, considering where we started, how far we’ve come, and what is to await in the future.

Reading this book for a video games history class. Very well written, overly complicated or simplistic! Worth it for any students, or anyone interested in reading about the history of the video game industry! :)

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