



Encyclopedia of Video Games [2 volumes]: The Culture, Technology, and Art of Gaming

By Mark J. P. Wolf

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This encyclopedia collects and organizes theoretical and historical content on the topic of video games, covering the people, systems, technologies, and theoretical concepts as well as the games themselves.

- More than 300 A–Z cross-referenced and integrated entries, from Atari to *Zelda*
- Dozens of screenshots and photographs
- A "Further Reading" bibliography section is included with many entries

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Gr 6-10-This encyclopedia both expands upon information presented in such general surveys as Tristan Donovan's *Replay: The History of Video Games* (Yellow Ant, 2010) and the editor's *Video Game Explosion* (Greenwood, 2007), and offers it in a more granular, accessible way. In more than 300 alphabetically arranged articles, the 97 contributors, a mix of researchers and game creators, discuss and reflect on video gaming's 50 years of history, technology, design, and sociology—as well as, naturally, groundbreaking games and systems, important producers, and professional media and organizations. Along with examinations of (selected) products from Pong to Sony PS3 and densely technical disquisitions on the "JAMMA Standard," "Z-Axis Depth," and other expert-level knowledge, articles covering such topics as "Girls' Games," "Education (Religious)," "Ludology," and "Cheating" explore social and psychological aspects of the pastime. Furthermore, articles on gaming in a number of countries and regions of the world provide international scope. Most articles end with reading lists, and a few feature small, poor-quality black-and-white photos. Though the alphabetical table of contents at the front of both volumes is superfluously paginated, a topical listing of articles in volume one and the requisite comprehensive index in volume two will be helpful for quick orientation, and a plethora of boldface terms in the articles functions as "see" references. Drab of appearance but broad and deep of coverage, this resource goes well beyond a narrow appeal to students of pop culture.—John Peters, Children's Literature Consultant, New York Cityα(c)
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From [Booklist](#)

Quite a range of topics is presented in this timely set, marking the fiftieth anniversary of the first “real” video game (*Spacewar!*, 1962). The 300-plus signed entries are arranged alphabetically in two volumes, from Abstraction-Ludology and machinima (digital art) to Zeebo (a 3G-enabled game console). The style is very readable throughout. Unfamiliar terms are defined (Advergame, Deludic play, Speedruns) as well as popular ones (Joysticks, Resolution, Scrolling), making this accessible even to someone who knows little about the topic. Entries include biographies, types of games (including those classified as racing, shooting, strategy, survival horror); companies (Atari, SEGA, Sony); groups (Entertainment Software Association, World Cyber Games); platforms (Nintendo Wii); terms; and selected games. Most entries run about two pages, with four pages for MMORPGs and six for Simulation games. Suggestions for further reading are included at the end of each entry, and a lengthy bibliography is at the end. There are numerous cross-references throughout the text. The index is somewhat disappointing—Madden is found several times within Sports games, but there’s no entry in the index for it (or for NFL or even football.) Despite Zynga using Facebook to spread *FarmVille*’s popularity, neither the company nor the site is found in the index. Plagiarism, copyright, and other legal issues are mentioned in a very few entries, but this topic deserves more attention, especially since the Supreme Court ruled on ratings and sales to children in 2011. Nor is there anything indexed about poker or other gambling games. Still, this is a decent look at a very popular topic that will be useful for high schools and public libraries. --Susan Gooden

Review

"This book offers well-written and informative entries on many topics relevant to game studies." - **Choice**

"The articles are written by an expert group of close to 100 contributors and discuss each topic in a clear writing style?even the more technology-oriented pieces. . . . Overall, this set is well done and fills a void

nicely. It is recommended for all collections." - **ARBA**

". . . this resource goes well beyond a narrow appeal to students of pop culture." - **School Library Journal**

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