

## Extra Lives Why Video Games Matter Tom Bissell

Console Wars Extra Lives Masters of Doom Extra Life Death by Video Game The Obama Diaries Death by Video Game Magic Hours Bit by Bit Video Games Around the World Fuck Yeah, Video Games The Art of Failure Reamde The Ultimate History of Video Games: Volume Two The Art of Game Design Ready Player One All Your Base Are Belong to Us Aesthetic Theory and the Video Game Blood, Sweat, and Pixels Reality Is Broken Super Better Replay Trapped in a Video Game Power-Up Getting Gamers Extra Lives Apostle Video Games and Well-being 8 Bits of Wisdom Lost in a Good Game The Father of All Things Gamelife The Disappointment Artist How to Talk about Videogames A History of Video Games in 64 Objects The State of Play Power Play Ten Things Video Games Can Teach Us High Score! Significant Zero

### Console Wars

A personal assessment of the author's addiction to video games explores his favorites, their roles as modern forms of popular art, and their habit-forming appeal while considering how he has neglected his professional and social responsibilities in favor of gaming activities.

### Extra Lives

A BEST BOOK OF THE YEAR: NPR, Slate, Publishers Weekly, Goodreads Following the success of *The Accidental Billionaires* and *Moneyball* comes *Console Wars*—a mesmerizing, behind-the-scenes business thriller that chronicles how Sega, a small, scrappy gaming company led by an unlikely visionary and a team of rebels, took on the juggernaut Nintendo and revolutionized the video game industry. In 1990, Nintendo had a virtual monopoly on the video game industry. Sega, on the other hand, was just a faltering arcade company with big aspirations and even bigger personalities. But that would all change with the arrival of Tom Kalinske, a man who knew nothing about videogames and everything about fighting uphill battles. His unconventional tactics, combined with the blood, sweat and bold ideas of his renegade employees, transformed Sega and eventually led to a ruthless David-and-Goliath showdown with rival Nintendo. The battle was vicious, relentless, and highly profitable, eventually sparking a global corporate war that would be fought on several fronts: from living rooms and schoolyards to boardrooms and Congress. It was a once-in-a-lifetime, no-holds-barred conflict that pitted brother against brother, kid against adult, Sonic against Mario, and the US against Japan. Based on over two hundred interviews with former Sega and Nintendo employees, *Console Wars* is the underdog tale of how Kalinske miraculously turned an industry punchline into a market leader. It's the story of how a humble family man, with an extraordinary imagination and a gift for turning problems into competitive advantages, inspired a team of underdogs to slay a giant and, as a result, birth a

\$60 billion dollar industry.

## **Masters of Doom**

Ever since I was in diapers, I've been playing video games. You read that correctly. Before I could control my own bodily functions, I was controlling virtual heroes and expertly guiding them through intense levels fraught with vicious enemies and bottomless pits. Turns out that video games come naturally to me. Throughout the years, I've never had any trouble dominating whatever title I've popped into a console system. But what about real life? I'm not quite so great at that. I've often wondered how much easier life would be if I had a controller and a set of extra lives to guide me through it. Eventually, this led to an epiphany: video games have taught me everything I need to know about succeeding in life. In fact, they've taught me everything I need to know about EVERYTHING. My extensive history with video games has prepared me for nearly every situation, from how to arrange blocks to how to save the universe. I just had to search my 8-bit soul and figure out what each game was trying to prepare me for in the real world. I've poured all of my "scientific" research and soul-searching into this book, drawn exclusively from the video game classics of the 1980s and early 1990s. So open up this book and start leveling up. Diapers are optional.

## **Extra Life**

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.

## **Death by Video Game**

#1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • Now a major motion picture directed by Steven Spielberg. "Enchanting . . . Willy Wonka meets The Matrix."—USA Today • "As one adventure leads expertly to the next, time simply evaporates."—Entertainment Weekly A world at stake. A quest for the ultimate prize. Are you ready? In the year 2045, reality is an ugly place. The only

time Wade Watts really feels alive is when he's jacked into the OASIS, a vast virtual world where most of humanity spends their days. When the eccentric creator of the OASIS dies, he leaves behind a series of fiendish puzzles, based on his obsession with the pop culture of decades past. Whoever is first to solve them will inherit his vast fortune—and control of the OASIS itself. Then Wade cracks the first clue. Suddenly he's beset by rivals who'll kill to take this prize. The race is on—and the only way to survive is to win. NAMED ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY Entertainment Weekly • San Francisco Chronicle • Village Voice • Chicago Sun-Times • iO9 • The AV Club “Delightful . . . the grown-up's Harry Potter.”—HuffPost “An addictive read . . . part intergalactic scavenger hunt, part romance, and all heart.”—CNN “A most excellent ride . . . Cline stuffs his novel with a cornucopia of pop culture, as if to wink to the reader.”—Boston Globe “Ridiculously fun and large-hearted . . . Cline is that rare writer who can translate his own dorky enthusiasms into prose that's both hilarious and compassionate.”—NPR “[A] fantastic page-turner . . . starts out like a simple bit of fun and winds up feeling like a rich and plausible picture of future friendships in a world not too distant from our own.”—iO9

## **The Obama Diaries**

Thirty-nine essays explore the vast diversity of video game history and culture across all the world's continents.

## **Death by Video Game**

Argues that video games are not fun but actually lead to feelings of frustration and incompetence and that video games are one of the few mediums that allow us to experience and experiment with failure.

## **Magic Hours**

An innovative guide to living gamefully, based on the program that has already helped nearly half a million people achieve remarkable personal growth In 2009, internationally renowned game designer Jane McGonigal suffered a severe concussion. Unable to think clearly or work or even get out of bed, she became anxious and depressed, even suicidal. But rather than let herself sink further, she decided to get better by doing what she does best: she turned her recovery process into a resilience-building game. What started as a simple motivational exercise quickly became a set of rules for “post-traumatic growth” that she shared on her blog. These rules led to a digital game and a major research study with the National Institutes of Health. Today nearly half a million people have played SuperBetter to get stronger, happier, and healthier. But the life-changing ideas behind SuperBetter are much bigger than just one game. In this book, McGonigal reveals a decade's worth of scientific research into the ways all games—including videogames, sports, and puzzles—change how we respond to stress, challenge, and pain. She explains how we can cultivate new powers of recovery and resilience in everyday life

simply by adopting a more “gameful” mind-set. Being gameful means bringing the same psychological strengths we naturally display when we play games—such as optimism, creativity, courage, and determination—to real-world goals. Drawing on hundreds of studies, McGonigal shows that getting superbetter is as simple as tapping into the three core psychological strengths that games help you build:

- Your ability to control your attention, and therefore your thoughts and feelings
- Your power to turn anyone into a potential ally, and to strengthen your existing relationships
- Your natural capacity to motivate yourself and super-charge your heroic qualities, like willpower, compassion, and determination

SuperBetter contains nearly 100 playful challenges anyone can undertake in order to build these gameful strengths. It includes stories and data from people who have used the SuperBetter method to get stronger in the face of illness, injury, and other major setbacks, as well as to achieve goals like losing weight, running a marathon, and finding a new job. As inspiring as it is down to earth, and grounded in rigorous research, SuperBetter is a proven game plan for a better life. You’ll never say that something is “just a game” again. From the Hardcover edition.

## **Bit by Bit**

This book draws on aesthetic theory, including ideas from the history of painting, music and dance, to offer a fresh perspective on the video game as a popular cultural form. It argues that games like Grand Theft Auto and Elektroplankton are aesthetic objects that appeal to players because they offer an experience of form, as this idea was understood by philosophers like Immanuel Kant and Theodor Adorno. Video games are awkward objects that have defied efforts to categorize them within established academic disciplines and intellectual frameworks. Yet no one can deny their importance in re-configuring contemporary culture and their influence can be seen in contemporary film, television, literature, music, dance and advertising. This book argues that their very awkwardness should form the starting point for a proper analysis of what games are and the reasons for their popularity. This book will appeal to anyone with a serious interest in the increasingly playful character of contemporary capitalist culture.

## **Video Games Around the World**

The phenomenal growth of gaming has inspired plenty of hand-wringing since its inception--from the press, politicians, parents, and everyone else concerned with its effect on our brains, bodies, and hearts. But what if games could be good, not only for individuals but for the world? In Power Play, Asi Burak and Laura Parker explore how video games are now pioneering innovative social change around the world. As the former executive director and now chairman of Games for Change, Asi Burak has spent the last ten years supporting and promoting the use of video games for social good, in collaboration with leading organizations like the White House, NASA, World Bank, and The United Nations. The games for change movement has introduced millions of players to meaningful experiences around everything from the Israeli-

Palestinian conflict to the US Constitution. Power Play looks to the future of games as a global movement. Asi Burak and Laura Parker profile the luminaries behind some of the movement's most iconic games, including former Supreme Court judge Sandra Day O'Connor and Pulitzer-Prize winning authors Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn. They also explore the promise of virtual reality to address social and political issues with unprecedented immersion, and see what the next generation of game makers have in store for the future.

## **Fuck Yeah, Video Games**

'Etchells writes eloquently A heartfelt defence of a demonised pastime' The Times 'Once in an age, a piece of culture comes along that feels like it was specifically created for you, the beats and words and ideas are there because it is your life the creator is describing. Lost In A Good Game is exactly that. It will touch your heart and mind. And even if Bowser, Chun-li or Q-Bert weren't crucial parts of your youth, this is a flawless victory for everyone' Adam Rutherford When Pete Etchells was 14, his father died from motor neurone disease. In order to cope, he immersed himself in a virtual world - first as an escape, but later to try to understand what had happened. Etchells is now a researcher into the psychological effects of video games, and was co-author on a recent paper explaining why WHO plans to classify 'game addiction' as a danger to public health are based on bad science and (he thinks) are a bad idea. In this, his first book, he journeys through the history and development of video games - from Turing's chess machine to mass multiplayer online games like World of Warcraft- via scientific study, to investigate the highs and lows of playing and get to the bottom of our relationship with games - why we do it, and what they really mean to us. At the same time, Lost in a Good Game is a very unusual memoir of a writer coming to terms with his grief via virtual worlds, as he tries to work out what area of popular culture we should classify games (a relatively new technology) under.

## **The Art of Failure**

Through the stories of gaming's greatest innovations and most beloved creations, journalist Harold Goldberg captures the creativity, controversy--and passion--behind the videogame's meteoric rise to the top of the pop-culture pantheon. Over the last fifty years, video games have grown from curiosities to fads to trends to one of the world's most popular forms of mass entertainment. But as the gaming industry grows in numerous directions and everyone talks about the advance of the moment, few explore and seek to understand the forces behind this profound evolution. How did we get from Space Invaders to Grand Theft Auto? How exactly did gaming become a \$50 billion industry and a dominant pop culture form? What are the stories, the people, the innovations, and the fascinations behind this incredible growth? Through extensive interviews with gaming's greatest innovators, both its icons and those unfairly forgotten by history, All Your Base Are Belong To Us sets out to answer these questions, exposing the creativity, odd theories--and passion--behind the twenty-first

century's fastest-growing medium. Go inside the creation of: Grand Theft Auto \* World of Warcraft \* Bioshock \* Kings Quest \* Bejeweled \* Madden Football \* Super Mario Brothers \* Myst \* Pong \* Donkey Kong \* Crash Bandicoot \* The 7th Guest \* Tetris \* Shadow Complex \* Everquest \* The Sims \* And many more! From the Trade Paperback edition.

## Reamde

The Diary of President Barack Obama The White House May 19, 2010 I was going to write about tonight's state dinner for Mexico and the amnesty plan, but we've got a national crisis here! I think somebody's been snooping in this diary! The pages are all wrinkled! And the most personal entries are dog-eared! WHAT THE HELL'S GOING ON HERE? (WASHINGTON, D.C.) On May 20, 2010, Laura Ingraham received a package from an anonymous source that will change the history of the United States and the legacy of President Barack Obama. While retrieving her automobile from the underground garage at the Watergate complex (where she had just enjoyed her weekly pedicure), Ingraham discovered a manila envelope on the hood of her car. When she picked it up, a deep baritone voice called out from a nearby stairwell: "Just read it. You'll know what to do." The shadowy figure then disappeared into the darkness without another word. The envelope contained copies of what appeared to be diary entries written by President Barack Obama, his family, and high-ranking administration officials. Because the "diaries" are so revealing, Ingraham felt compelled to release them to the American public and the citizens of the world. Major media outlets love to describe the president as "no drama Obama," but The Obama Diaries tells a different tale. Through these "diary entries," readers will see past the carefully constructed Obama façade to the administration's true plans to "remake America." In The Obama Diaries, Ingraham hilariously skewers the president and his minions. She takes aim at: •the cynical "razzle-dazzle" marketing of Obama's radical agenda •the use of the Obama "brand" and family to obscure Obama's true aims •Michelle Obama's gardening and anti-obesity initiative; and much more. Informative and hugely entertaining, The Obama Diaries will inspire both laughter and critical thinking about the future of the nation and the man currently at the helm. •the use of the Obama "brand" and family to obscure Obama's true aims •Michelle Obama's gardening and anti-obesity initiative; and much more. Informative and hugely entertaining, The Obama Diaries will inspire both laughter and critical thinking about the future of the nation and the man currently at the helm. Excerpts from Laura Ingraham's The Obama Diaries Obama on Sarah Palin: "Hell, doesn't Palin have anything better to do than criticize me? Shouldn't she be back home shooting some endangered wolf species from a helicopter?" (April 9, 2010) Michelle on being First Lady: "I'll be damned if all this fabulosity is going to go to waste reading Dr. Seuss to snot-nosed kids all day." (January 23, 2009) Vice President Joe Biden on Michelle Obama: "She's kind of like a black Hillary Clinton. I mean that in a good way." (May 5, 2009) Obama on his visit to the Vatican: "If I can ingratiate myself with a few more of these red-hats, the pope thing might not be a bad follow-up to the presidency." (July 10, 2009)

## The Ultimate History of Video Games: Volume Two

FEATURING: IAN BOGOST - LEIGH ALEXANDER - ZOE QUINN - ANITA SARKEESIAN & KATHERINE CROSS - IAN SHANAHAN - ANNA ANTHROPY - EVAN NARCISSE - HUSSEIN IBRAHIM - CARA ELLISON & BRENDAN KEOGH - DAN GOLDING - DAVID JOHNSTON - WILLIAM KNOBLAUCH - MERRITT KOPAS - OLA WIKANDER The State of Play is a call to consider the high stakes of video game culture and how our digital and real lives collide. Here, video games are not hobbies or pure recreation; they are vehicles for art, sex, and race and class politics. The sixteen contributors are entrenched—they are the video game creators themselves, media critics, and Internet celebrities. They share one thing: they are all players at heart, handpicked to form a superstar roster by Daniel Goldberg and Linus Larsson, the authors of the bestselling *Minecraft: The Unlikely Tale of Markus "Notch" Persson and the Game that Changed Everything*. The State of Play is essential reading for anyone interested in what may well be the defining form of cultural expression of our time. "If you want to explain to anyone why videogames are worth caring about, this is a single volume primer on where we are, how we got here and where we're going next. In every way, this is the state of play." —Kieron Gillen, author of *The Wicked + the Divine*, co-founder of Rock Paper Shotgun From the Hardcover edition.

## **The Art of Game Design**

A comprehensive overview of the evolution of video games covering topics such as, "Atari revolution;" "rise of cartridge-based consoles;" American video game industry; international video game industry; "Apple Mac;" "Nintendo Entertainment System;" Sega video games; PlayStation video games; and "girl gaming."

## **Ready Player One**

Russ has never been your typical teen. After being expelled, Russ has started to get his life back on track. He's a pop culture junkie, and living in a town where the popular teen soap "Cape Twilight" is filmed, how could he not be? So when Russ decides to make his own short film, he recruits the (emotionally unhinged) star of "Cape Twilight" and his own motley crew to help out. Seems like a great idea until the plan blows up in Russ's face. Just when everything seems to be falling apart, Russ receives a message on his cell phone — from himself. Recorded in the future, 'future Russ' informs him that the day can be fixed if he's willing to use an app to leap twelve hours into the past. Russ is happy to oblige, figuring the day can't get any worse. But he couldn't be more wrong. Because as soon as Russ tampers with time and space, he introduces dangerous glitches he can't control, including alternate of himself. And suddenly Russ's sanity and the lives of everyone he cares about are at risk if he can't find a way to regain control of his own life— past, present and future.

## **All Your Base Are Belong to Us**

"An award-winning videogame writer offers a rare behind-the-scenes look inside the gaming industry, and expands on how games are transformed from mere toys into meaningful, artistic experiences"--

## **Aesthetic Theory and the Video Game**

Jesse Rigsby hates video games—and for good reason. You see, a video game character is trying to kill him. After getting sucked in the new game Full Blast with his friend Eric, Jesse starts to see the appeal of vaporizing man-size praying mantis while cruising around by jet pack. But pretty soon, a mysterious figure begins following Eric and Jesse, and they discover they can't leave the game. If they don't figure out what's going on fast, they'll be trapped for good!

## **Blood, Sweat, and Pixels**

Enjoyable and informative examination of how Japanese video game developers raised the medium to an art form. Includes interviews, anecdotes, and accounts of industry giants behind Donkey Kong, Mario, Pokémon, and other games.

## **Reality Is Broken**

Presents a dual biography of John Carmack and John Romero, the creators of the video games Doom and Quake, assessing the impact of their creation on American pop culture and revealing how their success eventually destroyed their relationship.

## **SuperBetter**

NATIONAL BESTSELLER Developing video games—hero's journey or fool's errand? The creative and technical logistics that go into building today's hottest games can be more harrowing and complex than the games themselves, often seeming like an endless maze or a bottomless abyss. In *Blood, Sweat, and Pixels*, Jason Schreier takes readers on a fascinating odyssey behind the scenes of video game development, where the creator may be a team of 600 overworked underdogs or a solitary geek genius. Exploring the artistic challenges, technical impossibilities, marketplace demands, and Donkey Kong-sized monkey wrenches thrown into the works by corporate, *Blood, Sweat, and Pixels* reveals how bringing any game to completion is more than Sisyphean—it's nothing short of miraculous. Taking some of the most popular, bestselling recent games, Schreier immerses readers in the hellfire of the development process, whether it's RPG studio Bioware's challenge to beat an impossible schedule and overcome countless technical nightmares to build *Dragon Age: Inquisition*; indie developer Eric Barone's single-handed efforts to grow country-life RPG *Stardew Valley* from one man's vision into a multi-

million-dollar franchise; or Bungie spinning out from their corporate overlords at Microsoft to create Destiny, a brand new universe that they hoped would become as iconic as Star Wars and Lord of the Rings—even as it nearly ripped their studio apart. Documenting the round-the-clock crunches, buggy-eyed burnout, and last-minute saves, *Blood, Sweat, and Pixels* is a journey through development hell—and ultimately a tribute to the dedicated diehards and unsung heroes who scale mountains of obstacles in their quests to create the best games imaginable.

## **Replay**

You have been awakened. Floppy disk inserted, computer turned on, a whirring, and then this sentence, followed by a blinking cursor. So begins *Suspended*, the first computer game to obsess seven-year-old Michael, to worm into his head and change his sense of reality. Thirty years later he will write: "Computer games have taught me the things you can't learn from people." *Gameline* is the memoir of a childhood transformed by technology. Afternoons spent gazing at pixelated maps and mazes train Michael's eyes for the uncanny side of 1980s suburban Illinois. A game about pirates yields clues to the drama of cafeteria politics and locker-room hazing. And in the year of his parents' divorce, a spaceflight simulator opens a hole in reality. In telling the story of his youth through seven computer games, Michael W. Clune captures the part of childhood we live alone.

## **Trapped in a Video Game**

As Daniel Hardcastle careers towards thirty, he looks back on what has really made him happy in life: the friends, the romances, the video games. Told through encounters with the most remarkable – and the most mind-boggling – games of the last thirty-odd years, *Fuck Yeah, Video Games* is also a love letter to the greatest hobby in the world. From *God of War* to *Tomb Raider*, *Pokémon* to *The Sims*, Daniel relives each game with countless in-jokes, obscure references and his signature wit, as well as intricate, original illustrations by Rebecca Maughan. Alongside this march of merriment are chapters dedicated to the hardware behind the games: a veritable history of Sony, Nintendo, Sega and Atari consoles. Joyous, absurd, personal and at times swears, Daniel's memoir is a celebration of the sheer brilliance of video games.

## **Power-Up**

Explores the history of video and computer games and discusses the changes they have made in both the business world and popular culture.

## **Getting Gamers**

WOULD YOU KILL ONE PERSON TO SAVE FIVE OTHERS? If you could upload all of your memories into a machine, would that machine be you? Is it possible we're all already artificial intelligences, living inside a simulation? These sound like questions from a philosophy class, but in fact they're from modern, popular video games. Philosophical discussion often uses thought experiments to consider ideas that we can't test in real life, and media like books, films, and games can make these thought experiments far more accessible to a non-academic audience. Thanks to their interactive nature, video games can be especially effective ways to explore these ideas. Each chapter of this book introduces a philosophical topic through discussion of relevant video games, with interviews with game creators and expert philosophers. In ten chapters, this book demonstrates how video games can help us to consider the following questions: 1. Why do video games make for good thought experiments? (From the ethical dilemmas of the Mass Effect series to 'philosophy games'.) 2. What can we actually know? (From why Phoenix Wright is right for the wrong reasons to whether No Man's Sky is a lie.) 3. Is virtual reality a kind of reality? (On whether VR headsets like the Oculus Rift, PlayStation VR, and HTC Vive deal in mass-market hallucination.) 4. What constitutes a mind? (From the souls of Beyond: Two Souls to the synths of Fallout 4.) 5. What can you lose before you're no longer yourself? (Identity crises in the likes of The Swapper and BioShock Infinite.) 6. Does it mean anything to say we have choice? (Determinism and free will in Bioshock, Portal 2 and Deus Ex.) 7. What does it mean to be a good or dutiful person? (Virtue ethics in the Ultima series and duty ethics in Planescape: Torment.) 8. Is there anything better in life than to be happy? (Utilitarianism in Bioshock 2 and Harvest Moon.) 10. How should we be governed, for whom and by who? (Government and rights in Eve Online, Crusader Kings, Democracy 3 and Fable 3.) 11. Is it ever right to take another life? And how do we cope with our own death? (The Harm Thesis and the good death in To The Moon and Lost Odyssey.)

## Extra Lives

A visionary game designer reveals how we can harness the power of games to boost global happiness. With 174 million gamers in the United States alone, we now live in a world where every generation will be a gamer generation. But why, Jane McGonigal asks, should games be used for escapist entertainment alone? In this groundbreaking book, she shows how we can leverage the power of games to fix what is wrong with the real world—from social problems like depression and obesity to global issues like poverty and climate change—and introduces us to cutting-edge games that are already changing the business, education, and nonprofit worlds. Written for gamers and non-gamers alike, Reality Is Broken shows that the future will belong to those who can understand, design, and play games. From the Trade Paperback edition.

## Apostle

“Stephenson has a once-in-a-generation gift: he makes complex ideas clear, and he makes them funny, heartbreaking, and thrilling.” —Time The #1 New York Times bestselling author of Anathem, Neal Stephenson is continually rocking the literary

world with his brazen and brilliant fictional creations—whether he’s reimagining the past (The Baroque Cycle), inventing the future (Snow Crash), or both (Cryptonomicon). With Reamde, this visionary author whose mind-stretching fiction has been enthusiastically compared to the work of Thomas Pynchon, Don DeLillo, Kurt Vonnegut, and David Foster Wallace—not to mention William Gibson and Michael Crichton—once again blazes new ground with a high-stakes thriller that will enthrall his loyal audience, science and science fiction, and espionage fiction fans equally. The breathtaking tale of a wealthy tech entrepreneur caught in the very real crossfire of his own online fantasy war game, Reamde is a new high—and a new world—for the remarkable Neal Stephenson.

## **Video Games and Well-being**

Videogames! Aren’t they the medium of the twenty-first century? The new cinema? The apotheosis of art and entertainment, the realization of Wagnerian gesamtkunstwerk? The final victory of interaction over passivity? No, probably not. Games are part art and part appliance, part tableau and part toaster. In *How to Talk about Videogames*, leading critic Ian Bogost explores this paradox more thoroughly than any other author to date. Delving into popular, familiar games like Flappy Bird, Mirror’s Edge, Mario Kart, Scribblenauts, Ms. Pac-Man, FarmVille, Candy Crush Saga, Bully, Medal of Honor, Madden NFL, and more, Bogost posits that videogames are as much like appliances as they are like art and media. We don’t watch or read games like we do films and novels and paintings, nor do we perform them like we might dance or play football or Frisbee. Rather, we do something in-between with games. Games are devices we operate, so game critique is both serious cultural currency and self-parody. It is about figuring out what it means that a game works the way it does and then treating the way it works as if it were reasonable, when we know it isn’t. Noting that the term games criticism once struck him as preposterous, Bogost observes that the idea, taken too seriously, risks balkanizing games writing from the rest of culture, severing it from the “rivers and fields” that sustain it. As essential as it is, he calls for its pursuit to unfold in this spirit: “God save us from a future of games critics, gnawing on scraps like the zombies that fester in our objects of study.”

## **8 Bits of Wisdom**

Inspired by the groundbreaking *A History of the World in 100 Objects*, this book draws on the unique collections of The Strong museum in Rochester, New York, to chronicle the evolution of video games, from Pong to first-person shooters, told through the stories of dozens of objects essential to the field’s creation and development. Drawing on the World Video Game Hall of Fame’s unmatched collection of video game artifacts, this fascinating history offers an expansive look at the development of one of the most popular and influential activities of the modern world: video gaming. Sixty-four unique objects tell the story of the video game from inception to today. Pithy, in-depth essays and photographs examine each

object's significance to video game play—what it has contributed to the history of gaming—as well as the greater culture. A History of Video Games in 64 Objects explains how the video game has transformed over time. Inside, you'll find a wide range of intriguing topics, including: The first edition of Dungeons & Dragons—the ancestor of computer role-playing games The Oregon Trail and the development of educational gaming The Atari 2600 and the beginning of the console revolution A World of Warcraft server blade and massively multiplayer online games Minecraft—the backlash against the studio system The rise of women in gaming represented by pioneering American video game designers Carol Shaw and Roberta Williams' game development materials The prototype Skylanders Portal of Power that spawned the Toys-to-Life video game phenomenon and shook up the marketplace And so much more! A visual panorama of unforgettable anecdotes and factoids, A History of Video Games in 64 Objects is a treasure trove for gamers and pop culture fans. Let the gaming begin!

## **Lost in a Good Game**

A psychologist and life-long fan of video games helps you understand what psychology has to say about why video games and mobile game apps are designed the way they are, why players behave as they do, and the psychological tricks used to market and sell them.

## **The Father of All Things**

Anyone can master the fundamentals of game design - no technological expertise is necessary. The Art of Game Design: A Book of Lenses shows that the same basic principles of psychology that work for board games, card games and athletic games also are the keys to making top-quality videogames. Good game design happens when you view your game from many different perspectives, or lenses. While touring through the unusual territory that is game design, this book gives the reader one hundred of these lenses - one hundred sets of insightful questions to ask yourself that will help make your game better. These lenses are gathered from fields as diverse as psychology, architecture, music, visual design, film, software engineering, theme park design, mathematics, writing, puzzle design, and anthropology. Anyone who reads this book will be inspired to become a better game designer - and will understand how to do it.

## **Gamelife**

A journey into the heart of Christianity that explores the mysterious and often paradoxical lives and legacies of the Twelve Apostles -- a book both for those of the faith and for others who seek to understand Christianity from the outside in. Peter, Matthew, Thomas, John: Who were these men? What was their relationship to Jesus? Tom Bissell provides answers to these ancient, elusive questions. He examines not just who these men were (and weren't), but also how their identities have

taken shape over the course of two millennia. Ultimately, Bissell finds that the story of the apostles is the story of early Christianity: its competing versions of Jesus's ministry, its countless schisms, and its ultimate evolution from an obscure Jewish sect to the global faith we know today in all its forms and permutations. In his quest to understand the underpinnings of the world's largest religion, Bissell embarks on a years-long pilgrimage to the supposed tombs of the Twelve Apostles. He travels from Jerusalem and Rome to Turkey, Greece, Spain, France, India, and Kyrgyzstan, capturing the rich diversity of Christianity's worldwide reach. Along the way, he engages with a host of characters -- priests, paupers, a Vatican archaeologist, a Palestinian taxi driver, a Russian monk -- posing questions that range from the religious to the philosophical to the political.

## **The Disappointment Artist**

The Father of All Things is a riveting, haunting, and often hilarious account of a veteran and his son's journey through Vietnam. As his father recounts his experiences as a soldier, including a near fatal injury, Tom Bissell weaves a larger history of the war and explores the controversies that still spark furious debate today. Blending history, memoir, and travelogue, The Father of All Things is a portrait of the war's personal, political, and cultural impact from the perspective of the generation that grew up in the wake of the conflict. It is also a wise and revelatory book about the bond between fathers and sons.

## **How to Talk about Videogames**

An acclaimed novelist and critic argues that video games are the most vital art form of our time. Video games have seemingly taken over our lives. Whereas gamers once constituted a small and largely male subculture, today 67 percent of American households play video games. The average gamer is now thirty-four years old and spends eight hours each week playing--and there is a 40 percent chance this person is a woman. In Bit by Bit, Andrew Ervin sets out to understand the explosive popularity of video games. He travels to government laboratories, junk shops, and arcades. He interviews scientists and game designers, both old and young. In charting the material and technological history of video games, from the 1950s to the present, he suggests that their appeal starts and ends with the sense of creativity they instill in gamers. As Ervin argues, games can be art because they are beautiful, moving, and even political.

## **A History of Video Games in 64 Objects**

Inside the Games You Grew Up with but Never Forgot With all the whiz, bang, pop, and shimmer of a glowing arcade. The Ultimate History of Video Games reveals everything you ever wanted to know and more about the unforgettable games that

changed the world, the visionaries who made them, and the fanatics who played them. From the arcade to television and from the PC to the handheld device, video games have entranced kids at heart for nearly 30 years. And author and gaming historian Steven L. Kent has been there to record the craze from the very beginning. This engrossing book tells the incredible tale of how this backroom novelty transformed into a cultural phenomenon. Through meticulous research and personal interviews with hundreds of industry luminaries, you'll read firsthand accounts of how yesterday's games like Space Invaders, Centipede, and Pac-Man helped create an arcade culture that defined a generation, and how today's empires like Sony, Nintendo, and Electronic Arts have galvanized a multibillion-dollar industry and a new generation of games. Inside, you'll discover:

- The video game that saved Nintendo from bankruptcy
- The serendipitous story of Pac-Man's design
- The misstep that helped topple Atari's \$2 billion-a-year empire
- The coin shortage caused by Space Invaders
- The fascinating reasons behind the rise, fall, and rebirth of Sega
- And much more!

Entertaining, addictive, and as mesmerizing as the games it chronicles, this book is a must-have for anyone who's ever touched a joystick.

## The State of Play

"The finest book on video games yet. Simon Parkin thinks like a critic, conjures like a novelist, and writes like an artist at the height of his powers—which, in fact, he is." —Tom Bissell, author of *Extra Lives: Why Video Games Matter* On January 31, 2012, a twenty-three-year-old student was found dead at his keyboard in an internet café while the video game he had been playing for three days straight continued to flash on the screen in front of him. Trying to reconstruct what had happened that night, investigative journalist Simon Parkin would discover that there have been numerous other incidents of "death by video game." And so begins a journey that takes Parkin around the world in search of answers: What is it about video games that inspires such tremendous acts of endurance and obsession? Why do we so thoroughly lose our sense of time and reality within this medium? How in the world can people play them . . . to death? In *Death by Video Game*, Parkin examines the medical evidence and talks to the experts to determine what may be happening, and introduces us to the players and game developers at the frontline of virtual extremism: the New York surgeon attempting to break the Donkey Kong world record . . . the Minecraft player three years into an epic journey toward the edge of the game's vast virtual world . . . the German hacker who risked prison to discover the secrets behind *Half-Life 2* . . . Riveting and wildly entertaining, *Death by Video Game* will change the way we think about our virtual playgrounds as it investigates what it is about them that often proves compelling, comforting, and irresistible to the human mind—except for when it's not. From the Hardcover edition.

## Power Play

Tom Bissell is a prizewinning writer who published three widely acclaimed books before the age of thirty-four. He is also an

obsessive gamer who has spent untold hours in front of his various video game consoles, playing titles such as Far Cry 2, Left 4 Dead, BioShock, and Oblivion for, literally, days. If you are reading this flap copy, the same thing can probably be said of you, or of someone you know. Until recently, Bissell was somewhat reluctant to admit to his passion for games. In this, he is not alone. Millions of adults spend hours every week playing video games, and the industry itself now reliably outearns Hollywood. But the wider culture seems to regard video games as, at best, well designed if mindless entertainment. Extra Lives is an impassioned defense of this assailed and misunderstood art form. Bissell argues that we are in a golden age of gaming—but he also believes games could be even better. He offers a fascinating and often hilarious critique of the ways video games dazzle and, just as often, frustrate. Along the way, we get firsthand portraits of some of the best minds (Jonathan Blow, Clint Hocking, Cliff Bleszinski, Peter Molyneux) at work in video game design today, as well as a shattering and deeply moving final chapter that describes, in searing detail, Bissell's descent into the world of Grand Theft Auto IV, a game whose themes mirror his own increasingly self-destructive compulsions. Blending memoir, criticism, and first-rate reportage, Extra Lives is like no other book on the subject ever published. Whether you love video games, loathe video games, or are merely curious about why they are becoming the dominant popular art form of our time, Extra Lives is required reading. From the Hardcover edition.

## Ten Things Video Games Can Teach Us

"The finest book on video games yet. Simon Parkin thinks like a critic, conjures like a novelist, and writes like an artist at the height of his powers--which, in fact, he is." --Tom Bissell, author of Extra Lives: Why Video Games Matter On January 31, 2012, a twenty-three-year-old student was found dead at his keyboard in an internet cafe while the video game he had been playing for three days straight continued to flash on the screen in front of him. Trying to reconstruct what had happened that night, investigative journalist Simon Parkin would discover that there have been numerous other incidents of "death by video game." And so begins a journey that takes Parkin around the world in search of answers: What is it about video games that inspires such tremendous acts of endurance and obsession? Why do we so thoroughly lose our sense of time and reality within this medium? How in the world can people play them . . . to death? In Death by Video Game, Parkin examines the medical evidence and talks to the experts to determine what may be happening, and introduces us to the players and game developers at the frontline of virtual extremism: the New York surgeon attempting to break the Donkey Kong world record . . . the Minecraft player three years into an epic journey toward the edge of the game's vast virtual world . . . the German hacker who risked prison to discover the secrets behind Half-Life 2 . . . Riveting and wildly entertaining, Death by Video Game will change the way we think about our virtual playgrounds as it investigates what it is about them that often proves compelling, comforting, and irresistible to the human mind--except for when it's not. From the Hardcover edition.

## High Score!

Award-winning essayist Tom Bissell explores the highs and lows of the creative process. He takes us from the set of *The Big Bang Theory* to the first novel of Ernest Hemingway to the final work of David Foster Wallace; from the films of Werner Herzog to the film of Tommy Wiseau to the editorial meeting in which Paula Fox's work was relaunched into the world. Originally published in magazines such as *The Believer*, *The New Yorker*, and *Harper's*, these essays represent ten years of Bissell's best writing on every aspect of creation—be it Iraq War documentaries or video-game character voices—and will provoke as much thought as they do laughter. What are sitcoms for exactly? Can art be both bad and genius? Why do some books survive and others vanish? Bissell's exploration of these questions make for gripping, unforgettable reading.

## Significant Zero

In a volume he describes as "a series of covert and not-so-covert autobiographical pieces," Jonathan Lethem explores the nature of cultural obsession—from western films and comic books, to the music of Pink Floyd and the New York City subway. Along the way, he shows how each of these "voyages out from himself" has led him to the source of his beginnings as a writer. *The Disappointment Artist* is a series of windows onto the collisions of art, landscape, and personal history that formed Lethem's richly imaginative, searingly honest perspective on life. A touching, deeply perceptive portrait of a writer in the making.

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