



Vintage Games: An Insider Look at the History of Grand Theft Auto, Super Mario, and the Most Influential Games of All Time

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Vintage Games explores the most influential videogames of all time, including Super Mario Bros., Grand Theft Auto III, Doom, The Sims and many more. Drawing on interviews as well as the authors' own lifelong experience with videogames, the book discusses each game's development, predecessors, critical reception, and influence on the industry. It also features hundreds of full-color screenshots and images, including rare photos of game boxes and other materials. Vintage Games is the ideal book for game enthusiasts and professionals who desire a broader understanding of the history of videogames and their evolution from a niche to a global market.

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From Reader Review Vintage Games: An Insider Look at the History of Grand Theft Auto, Super Mario, and the Most Influential Games of All Time for online ebook

Mjhancock says

In Vintage Games, Barton and Loguidice pick 25 games they feel qualify as "vintage"--not just innovative, but influential, representing and creating a particular branch of games. While the authors themselves recognize that no such list is exhaustive, their list is very comprehensive: it covers the consoles, the computers, and the arcade games, from the text-based Zork to sandbox Grand Theft Auto III. It's a very basic approach; while the authors dwell briefly on issues like gender awareness and copyright, they never really delve deeply into anything beyond the game at hand. As a genre-building exercise, it's interesting, and provides a fairly detailed picture of video game history, but if you're looking for something deeper, other books, like the oft-mentioned "Ultimate History of Video Games" may be more useful.

David says

A generally pleasant read. The authors address a wide spectrum of influential computer and console games, in a fairly objective manner. The content is more intelligent and informative than 'Top 10' or 'Best [insert genre here] Games of All Time', but not at an academic level either. A decent blend of both that's of particular interest to gamers who have played for a few years and either want to see more about games they've played, or find out what inspired their authoring. My main annoyance is the authors need to state an entire dozen word chapter title when referring to games that are addressed elsewhere in the book, instead of a simple "(See Chapter 23)".

Themistocles says

This is the worst game book I've ever read. The authors manage to turn a vivid, fun topic into a boring and unbelievably pretentious paper wanna-be. They use "serious" words and "difficult" phrases and litter the pages with totally useless footnotes and in-text references in an effort to lend some legitimacy and seriousness that is, frankly, not needed.

Two of my favorite examples:

"The game can be played with the mouse(1)"

"(1)although it can also be played with the cursor keys"

and, the most unbelievable thing I've read in a video computer book (talking of Tetris):

"Perhaps we could also talk about Freud's 'anal stage', with the disappearing lines of tetrominoes analogous to our solid waste being flushed away in the toilet. Given this model, we might describe Tetris-fans as 'anal-retentive', compulsively arranging those pieces in some futile quest to achieve the gratification they missed during toilet training".

I rest my case.

The content is not that good either, with games seemingly randomly chosen and not much new info to learn.

Ugh. Avoid.

Kevin says

A rocky first chapter but then pure bliss for the long term gamer. I cut my teeth on a 2600 and I'm still gaming today so most of the games in this book I'd played or seen in action but the history behind them and their influence on other games are the two most interesting aspects of this book. I'm also a long time lurker at Armchair Arcade <http://www.armchairarcade.com/neo/nod...> at this link you can read nine additional chapters that wouldn't fit into the book. If you enjoy these chapters then you'll like the book itself, give them a read if you are a gamer or want to understand more about how games got to where they are today.

Thom says

Well researched. Would have liked more box shots than screen shots. Will have to go read the "bonus chapters" on the web.

David Natiuk says

A trip down memory lane while bringing credit to the blockbuster games that shaped the gaming industry. If you grew up in or around the dawn of video games and followed it along its path, you will most surely enjoy and appreciate this book.

If the subject matter was simply to look at the most influential games in their respective genres... that would be an enjoyable read. What makes this book great, however, is that it looks at the history of each influential game... what games preceded it, what kinds of games copied it, etc. You definitely understand that great video games were never created in a vacuum, and the most influential games were generally not even the first of their kind. What has made a game popular and influential has always been a convergence of great game design, originality, technological feats, societal timing, and breaking into the public awareness.

The research is well-sifted, which means a balance of looking at similar games while not being overly dry. Some genres have literally spawned thousands of copies/clones/wannabes and "Vintage Games" rightfully picks out a handful of the best in making its points. I also felt that the many types of gaming genres were represented well: from adventure to first-person shooter, platformers to performance games, and even the iconic text-adventures of early computing.

I enjoyed reading it for fun, and now it will also be fun to revisit some of my favorite game genres and perhaps "play the genre" in context of the book and feel it unfold on my computer. Thanks to the authors for creating a book with a unique perspective in an industry that I enjoy.

Isobel Griffey says

I have thoroughly enjoyed reading this. I didn't get to do much gaming growing up so this was a lot of new information for me. It was interesting to read about the history of games and how they laid foundations for others.

All the footnotes and references made me feel like I was reading a dissertation essay rather than a book but at the same time I was grateful for a lot of them because of my ignorance on the subjects.

Michael Scott says

Vintage Games is an analysis of the games that have penetrated most our culture. This reviewer finds that Bill Loguidice succeeds in balancing two opposing issues: on the one hand, he attempts to create an in-depth analysis of games that most professionals know by heart, thus exposing himself to high-nosed derision; on the other, he tries to make the analysis palatable by the non-expert. The book (including nine online chapters) focuses on a selection of thirty-four games, including Elite, Doom, Simcity, Diablo, and . For each game, the author presents the game's history (including the game's precursors), an answer to the question "Why did the game succeed?", the main technical innovation(s), the gameplay mechanics, and the game evolution (the commercial success, the sequels and the clones, other IP-related issues, etc.) Overall, I found this book a wonderful compendium and a useful future reference.
