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The Ultimate History Of Video Games: From Pong To Pokemon: The Story Behind The Craze That Touched Our Lives And Changed The World



Synopsis

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 audiobook 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 audiobook is a must-have for anyone who's ever touched a joystick.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I've been playing video games for 20 years now. I began with the Atari, saw the market crash, grew up with Nintendo, and got caught up in the 90's proliferation of newer and hotter systems. I know a

great deal about the industry, yet this book puts my knowledge to shame. Exhaustively researched and crammed ridiculously full of information, anecdotes, and hundreds of direct quotes from every walk of video game life, this book is worth more than one read-through. My copy is well-worn because I find it so easy to take with me on plane trips and just start reading through at random points. It's written in a very friendly, conversational tone and engages you with its prose. The book is extremely interesting because the author is clearly interested in the subject himself. He manages to get the kind of details and answer the type of questions you'd want to know, yet stays very thorough and accurate throughout. Loads of different subjects are covered, sometimes at great length: The bar where Pong was first tested. Nintendo's lawsuit against Galoob's Game Genie. Tengen illegally producing Nintendo games and the big N's forceful prosecution. The battles over Donkey Kong and Tetris. The founding of Electronic Arts. Sega's mid 90's dominance and slip of the cd based systems. The furor over Mortal Kombat. School shootings. I can't list enough, and I can't go on enough about it. This book is extremely comprehensive and covers the entire video game industry and all its major players chronologically from the 70s until the turn of the century. It's well-written, accurate (given all those direct insider quotes) and completely objective.

This is really two books in one. The first half is a detailed history of the rise and fall of Atari. It is chock full of interesting details, and rightly focuses on the fascinating personalities who drove the company that did more than any other to take video games mainstream. The author's years of covering the industry and these people paid dividends in this section. By contrast, the second half of the book, which mainly covers the rise of Sega, Nintendo and Sony, feels rushed and is far less comprehensive. Many parts felt like rewrites of news articles, rehashing history rather than bestowing new insights. I don't want to sound too harsh, because this is a good overview, but this section falls short compared with the high standards set by the Atari history. I also have a couple format quibbles. Many direct quotes are offset from the main text in bold. This is distracting. Some quotes simply repeat what had just been stated in regular text. I understand the need to back up assertions with quotes, but some of the comments are bland and don't really add anything. Other sections begin with quotes that are only tangentially related to the ensuing text, or were from speakers who don't make further appearances or whose comments are not elaborated on. Another complaint is the use of excerpted passages from contemporary news articles that don't give the source up front but force the reader to look up footnotes in the back. If a passage is important enough to offset from the main text, the reader should be told right away who wrote it and in what publication. Also, I thought the title was slightly misleading, since this is more a history of the video game *industry* rather than of video

games themselves.

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