Contents

Illustrations ix

Acknowledgments xi

Introduction xiii

A Brief Timeline of Video Game History xvii

Part I Looking at Video Games **1**

Chapter 1 What Is a Video Game? 3
Mark J. P. Wolf

Chapter 2 Imaging Technologies 9
Mark J. P. Wolf

Chapter 3 Modes of Exhibition 13
Mark J. P. Wolf

Chapter 4 Influences and Precursors 17
Mark J. P. Wolf

Chapter 5 The Study of Video Games 21
Mark J. P. Wolf

Part II The Early Days (Before 1985) **29**

Chapter 6 Mainframe Games and Simulations 31
David H. Ahl

Chapter 7 Arcade Games of the 1970s 35
Mark J. P. Wolf

Chapter 8 Video Games in Europe: The Early Years 45
David Winter
Sidebar System Profile: The Magnavox Odyssey 50
David Winter

Chapter 9 Early Home Video Game Systems 53
Leonard Herman

Chapter 10 Company Profile: Atari 59
Leonard Herman

Chapter 11 System Profile: The Atari Video Computer System (VCS) 63
Leonard Herman

Chapter 12 Vector Games 67
Mark J. P. Wolf

Chapter 13 Video Game Stars: Pac-Man 73
Mark J. P. Wolf

Chapter 14 The Rise of the Home Computer 75
Bob Rehak

Chapter 15 Genre Profile: Adventure Games 81
Mark J. P. Wolf
Sidebar Company Profile: Electronic Arts 89
Alison McMahan

Chapter 16 Arcade Games of the 1980s 91
Mark J. P. Wolf

Chapter 17 Laserdisc Games 99
Mark J. P. Wolf

Chapter 18 The Video Game Industry Crash 103
Mark J. P. Wolf

Part III The Industry Rebounds (1985–1994) 107

Chapter 19 System Profile: The Nintendo Entertainment System (NES) 109
Dominic Arsenault
Sidebar Company Profile: Nintendo 113
Dominic Arsenault

Chapter 20 A New Generation of Home Video Game Systems 115
Leonard Herman

Chapter 21 CD-ROM Games 121
Carl Therrien

Chapter 22 Genre Profile: Interactive Movies 127
Bernard Perron

Chapter 23 Arcade Games of the 1990s and Beyond 135
Mark J.P. Wolf

Chapter 24 Handheld Video Game Systems 143
Leonard Herman
Sidebar Company Profile: Sega 149
Alison McMahan

Chapter 25 Shareware Games: Between Hobbyist and Professional 151
Brett Camper

Part IV Advancing to the Next Level (1995–Present) 159

Chapter 26 The Later Generation Home Video Game Systems 161
Leonard Herman

Chapter 27 Online Role-Playing Games 173
Kelly Boudreau

Chapter 28 System Profile: Sony PlayStation 177
Dominic Arsenault
Sidebar Company Profile: Sony 181
Mark J.P. Wolf

Chapter 29 Video Game Stars: Lara Croft 183
Alison McMahan

Chapter 30 Genre Profile: First-Person Shooting Games 187
Bob Rehak
Sidebar Retrogames 194
Bob Rehak

Chapter 31 Independent and Experimental Video Games 197
Brett Camper

Chapter 32 Video Games in Europe 203
Lars Konzack

Chapter 33 Video Games in Asia 211
Benjamin Wai-ming Ng

Chapter 34 Video Games in Australia 223
Thomas H. Apperley

Part V A Closer Look at Video Games 229

Chapter 35 The Video Game Development Process 231
Feichin Ted Tschang

Chapter 36 Graphics in Video Games 239
Carl Therrien

Chapter 37 Sound in Video Games 251
Eric Pidkameny

Chapter 38 Video Game Genres 259
Mark J.P. Wolf
Sidebar Best-Selling Video Games 275
Mark J.P. Wolf

Chapter 39 The Video Game as an Object of Controversy 277
Dominic Arsenault
Sidebar Video Games Rating Systems 281
Mark J.P. Wolf

Chapter 40 Morals, Ethics, and Video Games 283
Mark J.P. Wolf

Chapter 41 Video Games and Their Relationship with Other Media 293
Martin Picard
Sidebar How to Get a Job in the Video Game Industry 301
Mark J.P. Wolf

Chapter 42 The Future of Video Games 303
Mark J.P. Wolf

Glossary of Video Game Terminology 311

Resource Guide 317

Notes 329

Index 343

About the Contributors 377