

Contents

Series Foreword	xi
Preface	xiii
Acknowledgments	xvii
A Note on Translations and Pronunciation	xix
Introduction	xxi

1 **Micros in the Margins: Computer Technology in the State Socialist Society** 1

Toward Normalization	3
Beyond the Quiet Life	5
A Revolution That Was Normalized	9
The State of the Computer Industry	12
Electronization Programs of the 1980s	15
Men, Women, and Machines	18
Side Roads to Micros	21
Who Needs a Home Computer?	27
Farm Computers and the Courageous Clone	31

2 **Hunting Down the Machine: Trajectories of Microcomputer Domestication** 35

A Machine That Obeys	39
Wandering Programmers	42
Spectacle from the West	45
Importing the Standard	47
The Shiny Side of Retail	50
A Room of Its Own	53

- 3 Our Amateur Can Work Miracles: Infrastructures of Hobby Computing 63**
 - Cybernetics for Youth 66
 - Repurposing the Paramilitary 71
 - Activist Meshworks 74
 - Tolerating the Man's World 77
 - Build Your Own Peripherals 81
 - Amateur Entrepreneurs 85
 - Starting a Computer Fanzine 87
 - Samizdat Research Institute 90
- 4 Who's Afraid of Gameplay? Czechoslovak Discourses on Computer Games 99**
 - Playing with Computers 102
 - Forbidden Pleasures 104
 - Bringing Games under Control 109
 - Computer Game Advocates 112
 - The Appreciation of *Tomahawk* 116
- 5 Lighting Up the Shadows: Informal Distribution of Game Software 123**
 - From Yugoslavia with Cracks 126
 - The Unregulated (Non)medium 133
 - Lightning-Fast Sneakernet 135
 - Homemade Tape Culture 139
 - (Mis)understanding Games 143
 - A Cottage Arcade Industry 147
- 6 Bastard Children of the West: Establishing a Domestic Coding Culture 153**
 - Czechoslovak Homebrew Scene 157
 - Ports and Conversions 164
 - What Became of Flappy 167
 - Forging the Shooter 171
 - Second Lives of Indiana Jones 174
 - Hacking Games 178
- 7 Empowered by Games: Games as a Means of Self-Expression and Activism 185**
 - Hello World! 190
 - Adventure in Your Home 192
 - Spreading Unofficial Culture 196

Small Subversions	199
A Protest of Sorts	204
Taking to the Streets	206

Conclusion 215

Bricoleurs and Tacticians	218
We Have Always Been Indie	219
Toward Comparative Histories	221
Preserving the Peripheral	223

Epilogue: After the Curtain Fell 227

Computers and Games in Transition	229
A Belated Cottage Industry	232
Homebrew Lives On	234
The Game Industry Today: Adventures, Army, and Automation	235
Where Are They Now?	238

Appendix: Important Dates 241

Glossary 243

Notes 247

Bibliography 315

Index 345