Understanding Video Games: The Essential Introduction

By Simon Egenfeldt-Nielson, Jonas Heide Smith, Susana Pajares Tosca

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From Pong to PlayStation 3 and beyond, *Understanding Video Games* is the first general introduction to the exciting new field of video game studies. This textbook traces the history of video games, introduces the major theories used to analyze games such as ludology and narratology, reviews the economics of the game industry, examines the aesthetics of game design, surveys the broad range of game genres, explores player culture, and addresses the major debates surrounding the medium, from educational benefits to the effects of violence.

Throughout the book, the authors ask readers to consider larger questions about the medium:

- what defines a video game?
- who plays games?
- why do we play games?
- how do games affect the player?

Extensively illustrated, *Understanding Video Games* is an indispensable and comprehensive resource for those interested in the ways video games are reshaping entertainment and society. A Companion Website (**www.routledge.com/textbooks/9780415977210**) features student resources including discussion questions for each chapter, a glossary of key terms, a video game timeline, and links to other video game studies resources for further study.

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- Sales Rank: #1421171 in Books
- Published on: 2008-02-17
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 10.00" h x 7.00" w x 1.00" l, 1.41 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 304 pages

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Editorial Review

Review

"Understanding Video Games is required reading for all students of game studies and game design. The text engagingly and comprehensively tackles the exploding field of video game studies, providing the reader with a thorough understanding of the debates, key ideas and history of this fascinating medium."

-**Mia Consalvo**, author of *Cheating: Gaining Advantage in Videogames*

About the Author
Simon Egenfeldt-Nielsen, **Jonas Heide Smith**, and **Susana Pajares Tosca** are members of the Center for Computer Games Research at IT University of Copenhagen.

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