



Understanding Video Games: The Essential Introduction

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

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Understanding Video Games is a crucial guide for newcomers to video game studies and experienced game scholars alike. This revised and updated third edition of the pioneering text provides a comprehensive introduction to the field of game studies, and highlights changes in the gaming industry, advances in video game scholarship, and recent trends in game design and development?including mobile, casual, educational, and indie gaming.

In the third edition of this textbook, students will:

- Learn the major theories and schools of thought used to study games, including ludology and narratology;
- Understand the commercial and organizational aspects of the game industry;
- Trace the history of games, from the board games of ancient Egypt to the rise of mobile gaming;
- Explore the aesthetics of game design, including rules, graphics, audio, and time;
- Analyze the narrative strategies and genre approaches used in video games;
- Consider the debate surrounding the effects of violent video games and the impact of "serious games."

Featuring discussion questions, recommended games, a glossary of key terms, and an interactive online video game history timeline, *Understanding Video Games* provides a valuable resource for anyone interested in examining the ways video games are reshaping entertainment and society.

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Editorial Review

Review

"A user-friendly, eminently readable account that has something to offer to both the neophyte and the specialist, *Understanding Video Games* is the text that is needed to secure a durable place to game studies in the academic curriculum." ?Marie-Laure Ryan, author of *Narrative as Virtual Reality: Immersion and Interactivity in Literature and Electronic Media*

"As the core text for my introductory games course, *Understanding Video Games* has remained an essential guide since its first edition. Ever attentive to the practicalities of classroom needs, this superb update presents its most complete and accessible overview of game studies yet." ?Soraya Murray, University of California, Santa Cruz

"*Understanding Video Games* is an admirably comprehensive treatment of the video game industry, history, culture, and theory. This new edition remains the best general textbook I've found for teaching video games in the college classroom." ?Alf Seegert, University of Utah

About the Author

Simon Egenfeldt-Nielsen is CEO of the award-winning company Serious Games Interactive and has worked as an assistant professor at the Center for Computer Games Research at the IT University of Copenhagen.

Jonas Heide Smith is head of digital communication at SMK. He has previously taught computer-mediated communication at the University of Copenhagen, the Copenhagen Business School, the IT University of Copenhagen, and Roskilde University.

Susana Pajares Tosca is an associate professor at the IT University of Copenhagen and is a founding editor of the journal *Game Studies*.

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