



# An Introduction to Game Studies

*Frans Mayra*

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## **An Introduction to Game Studies** Frans Mayra

An Introduction to Game Studies is the first introductory textbook for students of game studies. It provides a conceptual overview of the cultural, social and economic significance of computer and video games and traces the history of game culture and the emergence of game studies as a field of research.

Key concepts and theories are illustrated with discussion of games taken from different historical phases of game culture. Progressing from the simple, yet engaging gameplay of Pong and text-based adventure games to the complex virtual worlds of contemporary online games, the book guides students towards analytical appreciation and critical engagement with gaming and game studies.

Students will learn to:

- Understand and analyse different aspects of phenomena we recognise as 'game' and play'
- Identify the key developments in digital game design through discussion of action in games of the 1970s, fiction and adventure in games of the 1980s, three-dimensionality in games of the 1990s, and social aspects of gameplay in contemporary online games
- Understand games as dynamic systems of meaning-making

- Interpret the context of games as 'culture' and subculture
- Analyse the relationship between technology and interactivity and between 'game' and 'reality'
- Situate games within the context of digital culture and the information society

With further reading suggestions, images, exercises, online resources and a whole chapter devoted to preparing students to do their own game studies project, *An Introduction to Game Studies* is the complete toolkit for all students pursuing the study of games.

The companion website at [www.sagepub.co.uk/mayra](http://www.sagepub.co.uk/mayra) contains slides and assignments that are suitable for self-study as well as for classroom use. Students will also benefit from online resources at [www.gamestudiesbook.net](http://www.gamestudiesbook.net), which will be regularly blogged and updated by the author.

Professor Frans Mäyrä is a Professor of Games Studies and Digital Culture at the Hypermedia Laboratory in the University of Tampere, Finland.

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