

Gaming and Video Games

An inter-active escape from the humdrum...

Owen Jones



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by

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Table of Contents

Gaming and Video Games

Hello and thank you for buying this book called 'Gaming and Video Games - An inter-active escape from the humdrum...' I hope that you will find the information helpful, useful and profitable, and that i...

INSPIRATIONAL QUOTES

Getting To Know Online Role Playing Games

Combining Xbox And A Home Theatre

How To Review Video Games

How Video Games Consoles Work

A Video Game Environment Of Your Own

Dealing With Teen Video Game Obsession

Online Gaming

Online Role Playing Games

The Etiquette Of Multi-Player Games

Skins For Your Xbox Game System

The Rise And Fall Of The Old Gaming Systems

Xbox And Home Theatre

Playing Old Games On A New Computer

What Does A Computer Gaming System Need?

The Best Video Game Systems

Why do People Like Gaming?

Contact Details

Getting To Know Online Role Playing Games

Computer role playing games are video games where the player picks a character to become from a list and is sometimes allowed to personalize that entity's character and clothing before joining the game to interrelate with other people who have also selected to be computer fictional characters.

Depending on the game and the character, the entity might be decent or evil and may work with or against other players. Often it is just like strolling down the street, you do not always know who the person coming towards you truly is and what he or she is like. Could be friendly, could be a terrorist, could be a mugger, could be saintly.

There will be quests and you have to complete these quests to progress through the game. In order to complete some quests, you will need to gather up experience and particular things or powers or find someone to help you, depending on the game and the situation.

The first widely-played online role playing game was 'Dungeons and Dragons' and most contemporary games follow the game play laid down there. The modern games, or the majority of them, are more difficult than D&D, but then they have had something to copy and expand on.

The character that you adopt and develop is called an 'avatar' and normally, when you have adopted an avatar, you cannot swap it without restarting the game. Do not forget that your avatar will change subtly as the game advances by learning and procuring experience and tools or weapons.

Therefore, do not become tempted to change your avatar if it appears a bit wimpy at the start. Infants are not the adults that they will become, even if the kernel is already there. Your abilities will be displayed on screen somehow, so you will be able to see your strength, experience, magical prowess and what-not progress or diminish.

The setting for the role playing game (RPG) could be anything, but the most popular are fantasy, space and historical, so you could be in 'Middle Earth', on Mars or in 'Merrie Olde England' for example, depending on the game.

Most games involve magic, but not all and some RPG's permit you to re-enact real battles with your own strategy to see whether you would have won or lost - the Battle of the Little Big Horn, for example.

During the game, you will be required to complete quests or missions. Completing these quests usually takes certain abilities or tools or even other

people, so you will have to think about how to do it. This is like a chess game where check or checkmate can be obtained with just one piece, but more frequently it takes a number of pieces of certain ranks.

Not all the avatars that you meet will be managed by other players, Some, the non-role players (NRP's) will be computer-controlled and might be there to help you, normally with information or a present, or to hinder you by blocking your passage or fighting you. Some of these can get beaten and some cannot, so you could expend lots of time and energy on them, but you will not know without experience.

Combining Xbox And A Home Theatre

There are several video game systems on the market, but if you are looking for a game system that also can be utilised with a home theatre entertainment, then the best choice has to be the Xbox game console.

Often it is the situation that children will want to play games during the daytime on vacations and before bed during the week, whereas parents will want to watch films at night before going to bed. Therefore, the two age classes need not clash often with their use of the home theatre system.

Therefore, if you can buy a piece of equipment that fulfils both the functions of playing games and playing films, you can save some money. The Xbox game system fulfils this function, because the Xbox is one of the new generation of video game consoles that can also play films on DVD or whatever disk format.

The Xbox is really a very hi-tech piece of equipment, something that non-game players may not have realised. It fits easily with a home theatre system because it has wide screen video capability, HDTV screen resolutions and Dolby Digital and DTS sound support, making it a ideal home theatre system component.

The Xbox is also a good looking piece of kit, which will match any existing black home theatre apparatus you may already own. It does not look like just a plastic toy.

It was developed by Microsoft and has a sturdy, stylish look. The Xbox's case is black with an X on it and a green Xbox logo resembling a jewel.

The Xbox is essentially a cut-down computer as it has many components of a personal computer such as an Intel processor, NVidia graphic chips and an internal hard drive among others.

PC's are general purpose tools, whereas the Xbox is designed for playing DVD's in more ways than one. In other words, it is a dedicated computer. It is dedicated to the job of playing DVD's and it does it incredibly well.

However, it also has four controller sockets in the front of the box for connections and it has an Ethernet socket for multi player games that permits other gamers on the Internet to take part in the game.

The Xbox system includes as standard: the controllers with a 9 ft cable, a standard AV cable, and an AC power cord. It also ships with a DVD loading tray and a multi signal audio-video connector for easy connection to televisions and other home theatre equipment.

The Xbox will transform the fashion you think of games and how you play them, because it is so dedicated to making interactive games a reality and as exciting as they can. Games are written particularly for it such as the Dead or Alive series and the Halo series as well.

However, there are sports simulations to be had too such as football and Formula 1 motor car racing. The graphics, sound and overall reality are remarkable. Finally, for parents who are worried about what their kids are watching, playing or doing, there are parental controls built into the Xbox.

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