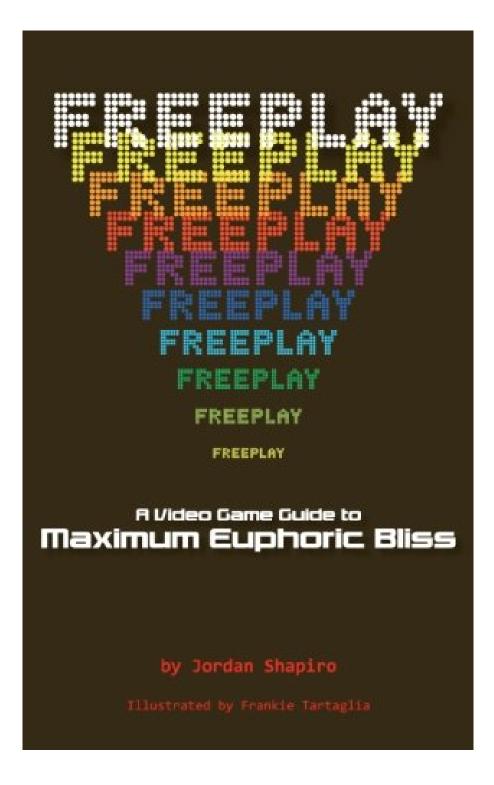


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We are the kids who grew up playing Space Invaders, Frogger, Q-bert, and Super Mario Brothers. Now, as adults, we're respectable contributors to a civilized society: professionals, parents, leaders, and policy makers. Still, the imagery of the games we played as children remains permanently seared into our personal and collective unconscious. The game world now shapes the way we think. It forms the way we perceive and interact with the world around us. The common view is that video games are an escape from the real world. But in FREEPLAY, author Jordan Shapiro shows us how the video games of our past (and present) function as interactive mythology. They are non-linear stories that help us derive meaning from the complicated paradoxes of everyday life. FREEPLAY is Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance for a new generation: part philosophy, part psychology, part spirituality, but ALL video games. Shapiro deftly blends Jungian and archetypal psychology in a way that is accessible and applicable to everyone. FREEPLAY is philosophy for the life world accessed through the user interface of the game world. Game on.

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Beginners guide

By C. Mills

This book planted a few good seeds of thought however these insights are spread out between pages of basic observations and depressing illustrations. The author should get his hands on some better games (or at least a few from this century) and keep writing because FREEPLAY has a hint of wisdom that could be developed into the classic it wants to be if the author familiarized himself with modern trends. Perhaps if the author was building gaming PCs with his kids or something then the Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance reference on the back would be appropriate, but in its current state I feel that is not an accurate comparison to make.

5 of 8 people found the following review helpful. The Dao for the Thirty-something By Priscilla Hobbs Freeplay by Jordan Shapiro considers the life lessons that can be learned from video games. From Frogger to Mario, Shapiro observes that video games help us become winners by giving us the practice necessary to tackle any challenge and how our decisions can impact our ability to come to the expected end.

I highly recommend this book to anyone who has found solace in video games who need some kind of inspiration. The book aims to guide the reader to "maximum euphoric bliss, " achieved when we get into Flow with the game.But don't be fooled into thinking this is a self-help book, because it's not. It won't tell you how to get to that state of Bliss. Rather, Shapiro offers his observations a sage wisdom, like aather, for us readers to take as we will. The advice of this book is the sort many could stand to hear. Video games are an increasingly central part of our lives, and provide spiritual opportunities that perhaps go unnoticed by the average player.

So embrace your inner gamer, pick up a controller, and become one with your avatar. The path to Bliss is right there on the screen before you.

2 of 6 people found the following review helpful.

Unique insight to video game psychology

By Alisar

While I was most interested to read something on a subject that has hardly been touched (at least from the perspective of the general public) I was fairly disappointed about a third of the way through. While it seems like the book starts out with good points at the beginning of each chapter, it quickly descends into philosophical babble that may be best to leave to the philosophers or psychologists. If the goal was to write a book that is nearly unreadable by the book's topic demographic, then one might consider it a success. Additionally, it is painfully obvious that the author is merely a casual gamer who has touched few games during this decade.

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