



The Role of Video Game Archives

by Liza Booker

Video Game History

“Not only is this problematic in and of itself as we run the risk of losing titles and documents forever as well as the stories locked up in the memories of key individuals who grow ever older, but also it is symptomatic of an industry that, despite its public proclamations, neither places a high value on its products as popular culture nor truly recognizes their impact on that culture. While a few valorized, still-ongoing, franchises like the Super Mario and Legend of Zelda series are repackaged and (digitally) re-released so as to provide continuity with current releases, a huge number of games simply disappear from view once their short period of retail limelight passes.” –M/C Journal

Current Archives

•2008: University of Michigan’s Computer and Video Game Archive opens in the Duderstadt Center. According to an article on Ann Arbor.com, “Sometimes it’s the games themselves are being studied, for example one student researched the censorship of Nazi imagery in American and German versions of the same game. Other times it’s players which are the subject, like an industrial engineering class studying the effects of texting while driving.”

•2008 (cont’d): National Media Museum and Nottingham Trent University in the UK hosts the National Videogame Archive, which aims to preserve the history and culture of video games.

The Future

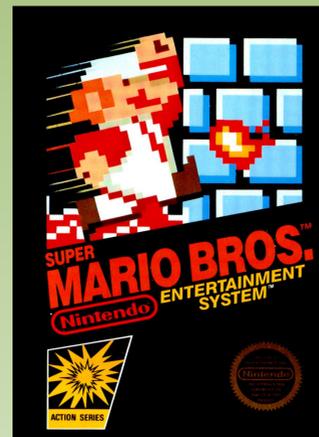
- Video game archives are places where both research and entertainment can occur.
- “The explosive growth of gaming as a cultural phenomenon and a medium for communication and learning is quickly making it a required element of academic collections that want to keep up with their faculty's teaching and research needs.” –Mary Laskowski and David Ward



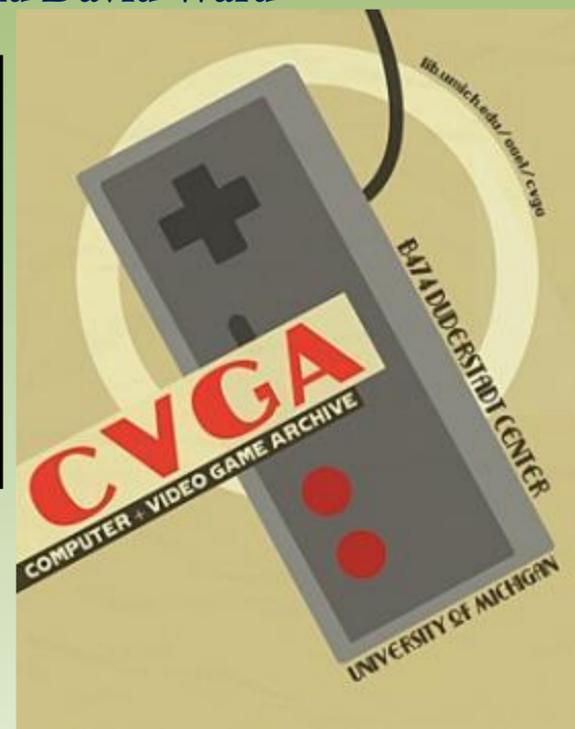
Playstation Portable (PSP) GO



Nintendo Famicom Games Console



An advertisement for the Computer and Video Game Archive



University of Michigan's Computer and Video Game Archive