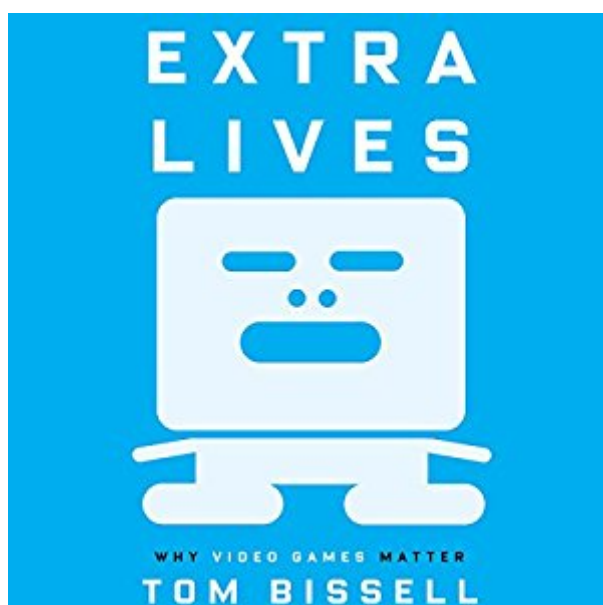


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# Extra Lives: Why Video Games Matter



## Synopsis

In *Extra Lives*, acclaimed writer and life-long video game enthusiast Tom Bissell takes the reader on an insightful and entertaining tour of the art and meaning of video games. In just a few decades, video games have grown increasingly complex and sophisticated, and the companies that produce them are now among the most profitable in the entertainment industry. Yet few outside this world have thought deeply about how these games work, why they are so appealing, and what they are capable of artistically. Blending memoir, criticism, and first-rate reportage, *Extra Lives* is a milestone work about what might be the dominant popular art form of our time. --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

## Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

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## Customer Reviews

This is a book that tries to be four different things and, surprisingly, manages to succeed at all of them. Bart Motes took it as a series of essays to be read for enjoyment and insight into the experience and meaning of video games. I agree with what he wrote from that perspective. My interest is broader and shallower. I am interested in games and play in general, and also in the technology used to create deeply interactive computer software. I only dabble at games at low difficulty levels and short attention span, more to satisfy curiosity than for enjoyment. I have never been stirred by in-game events, it's all pixels to me. Nevertheless, I see their great power, and respect that they are an important part of our evolving culture. You don't understand the world today

unless you have at least nodding acquaintance with these games, and this book offers considerably more than a nodding acquaintance. The less you know about video games, the more you need this book. The ostensible topic of the book is critical analysis of video games. It is an exploration, not a conclusion, and as such it is tentative and dialectical at many points, but can suddenly switch to positive certainty, backed by the authority of the native speaker. I disagree with Bart Motes that the author is apologetic, he is a rigorous advocate for both the games and traditional standards of criticism. The two often conflict, and the book makes only suggestions about potential resolutions. You won't find the answer here, but you will find the question poked hard from a lot of non-obvious angles. Finally this book is a fascinating piece of autobiographical fiction.

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