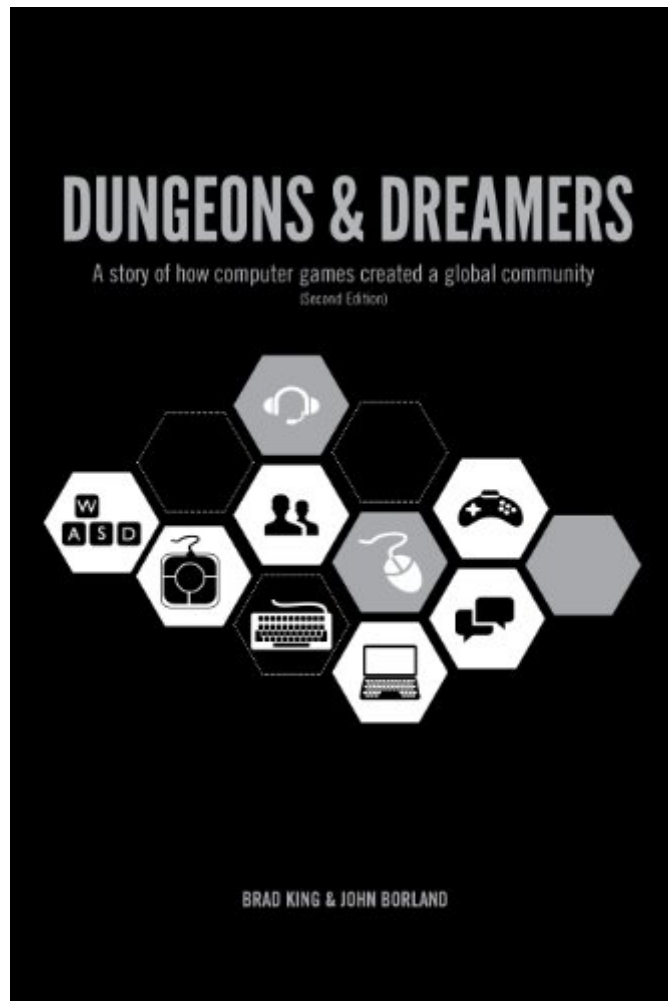


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# Dungeons & Dreamers: A Story Of How Computer Games Created A Global Community



## Synopsis

In 1974, Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson published the tabletop game Dungeons & Dragons, a fantasy role-playing game. Through the next 40 years, computer game developers used these fantasy worlds as archetypes for the budding virtual game worlds. These games would become as varied as books in a library, but the essence of each was built upon community. People gathered and played...together. *Dungeons & Dreamers: A story of how computer games created a global community* follows the designers, developers, and players who built the virtual games and communities that define today's digital entertainment landscape and explores the nature of what it means to live and thrive in virtual communities.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

My review is written from the perspective of an outsider. I grew up in the 50s and 60s, before the rise of role-play gaming (RPG), and entered the emerging computing world of the 70s and 80s as a scientist and professor, eager to use new digital tools for my research and teaching. By the time online gaming developed, matured, and propagated, I was off in a different realm of data acquisition

and analysis. Why would I read King and Borland's *Dungeons & Dreamers: A Story of How Computer Games Created a Global Community*, let alone dare to comment on it? The answer is in an eye-opening experience I had recently. I had the opportunity to finally visit a bookstore that I had passed by for months. For reasons that I don't need to elaborate here, I had assumed that the bookstore would be a sleepy place, with few customers, and much quiet. One evening, I decided to stop in. To my amazement, the place was packed, and alive with excitement. Over half of the store was occupied with tables, each of which was filled with teenagers and young adults, male and female in almost equal proportion. I asked the proprietor what was going on, and he replied, "Oh, it's game night." There were no gaming rigs, no monitors, just table after table with maps spread out, and players with notebooks and tokens in hand. For me, this was a revelation. After all, this was happening now, in 2014, not in the 70s or 80s. "Paper gaming" was still alive and well. The absence of modern technology was a surprise, but what astonished me was the level of social engagement. The enjoyment of the participants was palpable. People were laughing, talking, sharing, and occasionally commiserating. The whole place had a party atmosphere in the best sense of the term.

What is it? *A Story of How Computer Games Created a Global Community* is the official tag line. Wow is it! This is not some dull book. Instead it's a book meant to tell a story and stories are best told using a character(s). In this case the primary character is Richard Garriott. While one of the main characters is Richard Garriott it certainly is not limited to him. Dr. Cat, Starr Long, Steve Jackson, and many many more are referenced. People whose paths did not cross with Richard and even some famous game players. Yet there is a core feel that uses Richard to tell a story and by doing so it makes the book fun and interesting. I have a hard time passing up a good Fantasy or Sci-Fi novel in favor of non-fiction as I really like to get lost in other worlds when reading. That has not been an issue for me with this book. I have been sucked in and loving every moment of it. I think anyone of any age or past experiences would enjoy it and find it useful but there is definitely an added connection for me in reading it. Having started playing D&D around 1982 or so and Computer games shortly after that I can really connect with a lot of the information in the book. I was one of those kids that had access to a professor's account to use the internet before it was public and experience the early days of muds. I remember playing Zork! As the gaming industry grew reading this book helped me relive the feelings of remembering the first time I played games like Doom and following companies like Apogee as they started out. Even from a pen and paper gaming standpoint it made me think back to the first Steve Jackson games being published.

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