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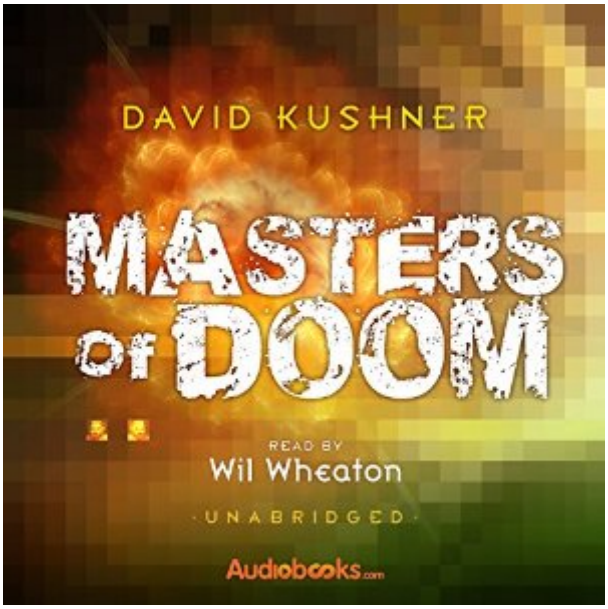
Masters Of Doom: How Two Guys Created An Empire And Transformed Pop Culture



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Synopsis

Masters of Doom is the amazing true story of the Lennon and McCartney of video games: John Carmack and John Romero. Together, they ruled big business. They transformed popular culture. And they provoked a national controversy. More than anything, they lived a unique and rollicking American Dream, escaping the broken homes of their youth to produce the most notoriously successful game franchises in history - Doom and Quake - until the games they made tore them apart. This is a story of friendship and betrayal, commerce and artistry - a powerful and compassionate account of what it’s like to be young, driven, and wildly creative.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I cannot give this book any higher praise than I will now attempt to bestow.This is a fascinating account of perhaps the most intriguing story in the world of computer gaming: the story of id Software’s rise to prominence through the development of Wolfenstein 3D, Doom, and Quake, as well as the highly publicized split between the two men most responsible for these blockbusters, the two Johns: John Carmack and John Romero.The book is not only an entertaining blow-by-blow account of the events that transpired in this story, but is also a cunningly crafted and penetrating look inside the psyche and personality of two fascinating human beings, and the wild initial success of colloboration followed by the bitter conflict bred by the polar forces that drove them. As such, its appeal transcends that of the video gaming community; it is a marvelous case study in sociology as well as a chronicle of the creation of computer games.Masters of Doom is ultimately a "rise and fall"

tale, in a sense. id Software, John Carmack, and John Romero will likely never reach the heights they achieved in the glory days following the release of Doom, but it is arguable that no single company or individual developer will ever do so again either.The book is uncompromising in its account of the conflicts, and assesses blame only through the eyes of the people involved, without sounding preachy. Kushner assumes a neutral role and presents a remarkably balanced portrayal of the events, siding with neither Romero nor Carmack on the critical issues, leaving the reader with the accurate perception that both were right in their own way.

Americans spend more money on electronic games than they do on movie tickets. Much of the enthusiasm for the games comes from "Doom" which was released ten years ago. Every gamer knows about Doom, and every parent who had not already worried about it was able to worry about it after it was blamed for inspiring the Columbine murderers. Doom was the brainchild of two gamers and computer geeks who are among the army of dweebs changing the way the world does things electronically. Its huge success merits study and understanding, and in _Masters of Doom: How Two Guys Created an Empire and Transformed Pop Culture_ (Random House) by David Kushner, it gets just the sort of exciting and weird history that ought to bring enchantment to gamers, envy to investors, and enjoyment to anyone interested in our modern ways of amusing ourselves.Their many fans call them "The Two Johns," John Carmack and John Romero. They were both products of broken homes, and of the years when video games were enjoyed in arcades only. Both of them were better at playing video games and writing programs than they were at making grades or making friends. They came up with real innovations, now taken for granted, like side scrolling for the PC or rooms with skewed walls. All were steps to make the games look better, of course, but the overall effect was to make them more involving, increasing the illusion that "You are not just playing the game, you’re inhabiting it." They also increased the blood; monsters or bad guys that were killed did not simply vanish when brought into the sights and fired upon. These were not the only innovations; Doom, released in 1993, featured the "Deathmatch" in which players could play together or against each other.

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