

FOREWORD

The world of the video game industry is one that is run mostly by the Japanese. Sony, Sega, and Nintendo develop and distribute 100% of the world's video game consoles. Nintendo, and to a much less degree, Bandai and SNK, control 100% of the hand-held market.

But it wasn't always like that.

Once upon a time the video game industry was an industry dominated by the Americans. And the company that dominated the industry was one that ironically had a Japanese name: To the Japanese, the word *Atari* meant something akin to 'prepare to be attacked'. And the world was attacked with a variety of games such as the world had never seen before. Before long Atari was a name that was synonymous with video games. Today Atari is only synonymous with video games to the many die-hard classic videogamers who get stirred with emotions of nostalgia whenever they hear the name or see the logo. Although Atari wasn't the first company to release video games for the home, it was the one that began an industry that is still reaching new heights today.

To the die-hard Atarians, the company ended in 1984. Yet to the new breed of gamer today, it is a name that symbolizes retroing into the future. Today's Atari is only a shadow of its former self, but it represents a company that has spit in the eye of death many times and to the joy Atarians everywhere has managed to stay alive somehow.

This book is a tribute to that magical company which at one time grew too fast and fell even faster. It is not just a history of the company, but rather a road map to every facet of the Atari universe. Whether your interest lies in the PC software from AtariSoft, or the PC software from Hasbro Interactive, you'll find it within these two covers.