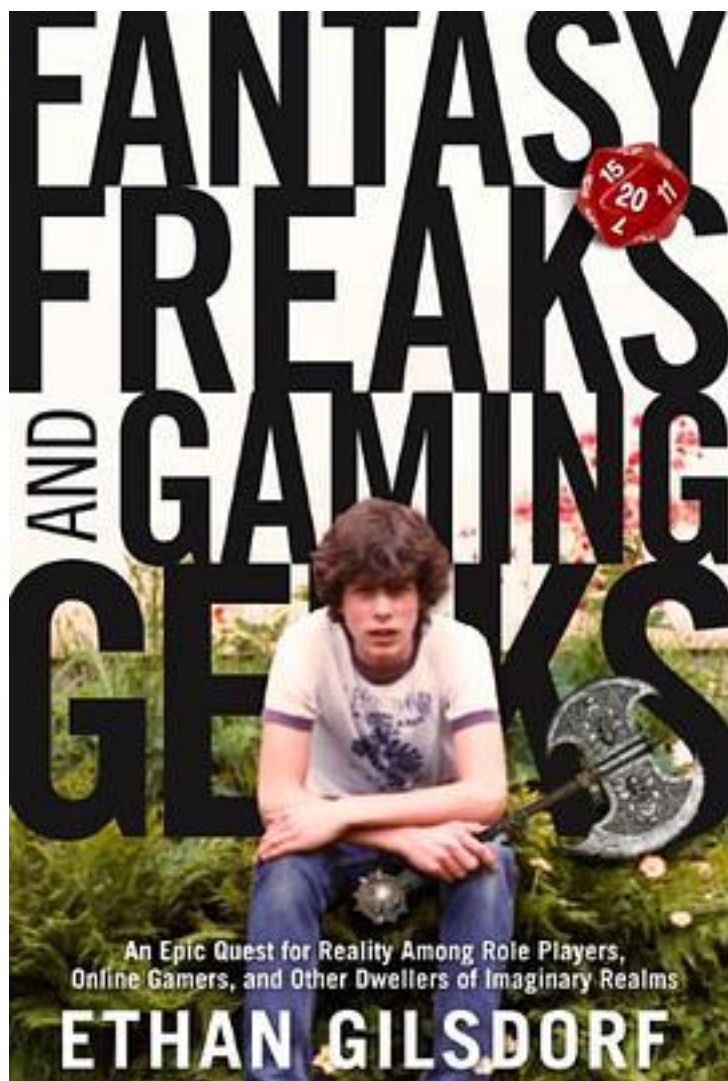


Fantasy Freaks and Gaming Geeks



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著者:Gilsdorf, Ethan

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Fantasy. Science fiction. Role-playing games. People around the globe turn away from the "real" world to inhabit others. Movie fan-freaks design costumes and collect "Lord of the Rings" action figures. Some attend comic book conventions and Renaissance fairs, others play live-action role-playing games (LARPs). The online game World of Warcraft (WoW) has lured twelve million users worldwide. Even old-school role-playing games such as Dungeons and Dragons (DandD) are still wildly popular. What could one man find if he embarked on a journey through fantasy world after fantasy world? In an enthralling blend of travelogue, pop culture analysis, and memoir, forty-year-old former DandD addict Ethan Gilsdorf crisscrosses America, the world, and other worlds--from Boston to New Zealand, and Planet Earth to the realm of Aggramar. On a quest that begins in his own geeky teenage past and ends in our online gaming future, he asks gaming and fantasy geeks how they balance their escapist urges with the kingdom of adulthood. He speaks to grown men who build hobbit holes, and to grown women who play massively multiplayer online games. He seeks out those who dream of elves, long swords, and heroic deeds, and mentally inhabit faraway magical lands. What lures them--old, young, male, female, able-bodied, and disabled--into fantasy worlds, and for what reasons, whether healthy, unhealthy, or in between? Our noble hero battles online goblins, trolls, and sorcerers for weeks on end. He travels to pilgrimage sites: Tolkien's hometown, movie locations, and castles. He hangs out with Harry Potter tribute bands. He LARPs. He goes to fan conventions and gaming tournaments. He camps with medieval re-enactors--12,000 of them. He becomes Ethon, Ethonian, and Ethon-An3. He sews his own tunic. He even plays DandD. What he discovers is funny, poignant, and enlightening.

作者介绍:

目录:

[Fantasy Freaks and Gaming Geeks_ 下载链接1](#)

标签

评论

[Fantasy Freaks and Gaming Geeks_ 下载链接1](#)

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