Foreword

In 1995, in Los Angeles California, I walked up on to the stage at SIGGRAF and gave a presentation on girls and games. My talk was quite controversial, even preposterous, as it was considered common knowledge at the time that girls and women did not and would not play computer games. In fact, the idea that we should even consider women when talking about games was met with disbelief and derision.

Today, no one would dream of arguing that women don't play computer games. Study after study has shown that not only do women gamers make up nearly half of all game players but that they are a lucrative market unto themselves. The game industry is fairly falling over itself in an attempt to cater to this fast growing market segment.

With this complete turnaround in the game industry's attitude toward female game players, one would assume the same thing would have happened in the makeup of the game industry personnel. This, however, is not the case.

Traditional industry, outside the game industry, has had diversity measures in place for over 20 years. This has produced a wealth of information that has proved over and over again that diversity in the workforce is good for business. The fascinating thing about diversity is the way it improves business; not by just by improving efficiency or streamlining processes, but by increasing creativity and inspiring innovation (Forbes Insights, 2012).

Creativity and innovation - these are the two key things the game industry must have to succeed. Yet, the game industry is still primarily a monoculture.

That is why this book is so keenly important to the industry right now. Through this book, Prescott and McGurren clearly paint a picture of where women currently are in the games industry. Using empirical studies and theoretical work the book explains their situation and explores the forces at work to keep them there. The books use of individual stories to highlight the studies brings a fascinating personal note which humanizes the situation and gives it an immediacy that drives home the message.

Finally, this book not only concisely explains the current situation and provides thought provoking analysis of how and why the industry got into this shape, but it also provides ample opportunity to explore avenues for moving forward. This is the key for this industry. If we want the creativity and innovation that comes with diversity, we must understand how we got where we are and then be open to exploring how to change our situation. Works like this one are keystones in that journey.

Sheri Graner Ray
Women in Games International, USA & Zombie Cat Studios, USA

Sheri Graner Ray *is the Founder and CEO of Zombie Cat Studios, an independent game studio and consulting firm. She started in the game industry in 1989 as a writer/designer and designer and has worked with such companies as EA, Cartoon Network, the US Navy and most recently, Schell Games. Sheri co-founded Women in Games International and authored the book Gender Inclusive Game Design - Expanding the Market. In 2005 she was awarded the IGDA's Game Developers' Choice Award for her work in gender and games.*

REFERENCES

Insights, F. (2012). *Diversity & inclusion: Unlocking global potential*. Retrieved from.http://images. forbes.com/forbesinsights/StudyPDFs/global_diversity_rankings_2012.pdf