**Summary**

Games such as those of the Zork series were very popular as personal computers began to enter American homes and schools during the 1980s. These games had no graphics but described a scene textually. The player would interact with the game by typing simple commands, such as "go east," "take sword," or "kill the troll with the sword" For many of my generation, these adventure games provided our first experience of interacting with a computer program. A community of "amateurs"coalesced around the genre, developing its own creation and distribution platforms, competitions, publications, and databases. This amateur IF community has now persisted far longer than its commercial progenitor and has arguably produced more sophisticated literary work. Interactive fiction is the genre of electronic literature most explicitly embedded within a gaming context. Other types of games and the cultures that have formed around them also provide form and fodder for the creation of electronic fiction. Digital artists such as Cory Arcangel have appropriated game platforms as artistic media, for example by hacking the classic Nintendo Super Mario Bros game to remove all the graphics and sprites other than the clouds to produce the artwork Super Mario Clouds. Electronic literature often engage digital culture critically and so there is no avoiding the tropes and conventions of contemporary computer game culture. In studying electronic literature, we are often called to think in terms of border zones between established forms of cultural practice. Computer games provide electronic literature with one such border zone.