Contents

introduction — 1
Solid Snake's War Dystopia — 1
Science Fiction and Video Games — 4
Thinking with Video Games —— 14
Several Notes About This Book —— 17
The World Is Born From Zero —— 19
Chapter 1
A Method for Thinking Speculation, Science Fiction, and Video Games —— 21
What is Speculation? —— 21
Speculation in Science Fiction —— 22
Contingency and Facticity —— 36
Hume's Problem —— 37
Mechanics of Speculation —— 41
The Plenitude of Speculation —— 52
Chapter 2
Potential Labor: On VA-11 HALL-A — 54
Introduction —— 54
Immaterial Labor —— 57
Games, Subjectivity, and Speculation —— 63
VA-11 HALL-A and the Speculative Bartender — 78
Potential Labor Beyond the Workplace —— 88
Subjectivity in Third Person —— 90
Thinking Like A Chicken Fryer —— 93
Coda: Radicalizing the Subject —— 97
Chapter 3
Anti-Blackness and the Aesthetic Grounding of Speculation: On the Last of
Us and the Last of Us Part 2 —— 101
Introduction —— 101
A Note On This Chapter —— 103
Game Studies and the Racial Imagination —— 104
The Last of Us: Henry, Sam, and the Void —— 114
Left Behind: Riley's Bite —— 126
The Last of Us Part II: Nora, The Basement, and the Prompt —— 129

Chapter 4

The Politics of Design in Climate Change Games — 141

Introduction — 141

The Capabilities of Modeling — 149

Affective Climate — 158

Direct Intervention in the Climate Disaster — 169

Beyond Intervention — 175

Conclusion — 178

Bibliography — 180

Media — 192

Index of Names — 194

Index of Subjects — 197