



Virtual Reality

The Revolutionary Technology
of Computer-Generated Artificial Worlds
— and How It Promises to Transform Society

HOWARD RHEINGOLD

Virtual reality is the hot buzz these days in both high technology and underground pop culture
... [a] high-tech, real life adventure story." — *San Francisco Chronicle*

THE MIND-BOGGLING BESTSELLER

VIRTUAL REALITY

HOWARD RHEINGOLD

A TOUCHSTONE BOOK

Published by Simon & Schuster

New York London Toronto Sydney Tokyo Singapore



TOUCHSTONE

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CONTENTS

Part One A MICROSCOPE FOR THE MIND 11

Chapter 1:	"GRASPING REALITY THROUGH ILLUSION"	13
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Part Two BREAKING THE REALITY BARRIER 47

Chapter 2:	THE EXPERIENCE THEATER AND THE ART OF BINOCULAR ILLUSION	49
Chapter 3:	MACHINES TO THINK WITH	68
Chapter 4:	THE THRESHOLD OF VIRTUAL EXPLORATION	93
Chapter 5:	ENTERING CYBERSPACE	104

Part Three THE REALITY-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX 129

Chapter 6:	BLASTOFF AT NASA	131
Chapter 7:	THE BIRTH OF THE VR BUSINESS	154
Chapter 8:	CYBERSPACE AND SERIOUS BUSINESS	174
Chapter 9:	REALITY ON YOUR RETINA	193
Chapter 10:	COOL GADGETS AND INDUSTRIAL POLICIES	215

Chapter 11:	"VISUAL, INTELLIGENT, AND PERSONAL"	240
Chapter 12:	OUT OF THE BODY	255
Chapter 13:	THE ORIGINS OF DRAMA AND THE FUTURE OF FUN	286
Chapter 14:	THE FEEL OF THINGS	312
Chapter 15:	HOMEBREW VR	335

Part Four

VIRTUAL REALITY AND THE FUTURE

343

Chapter 16:	TELEDILDONICS AND BEYOND	345
Chapter 17:	CYBERSPACE AND HUMAN NATURE	378
	References	392
	Index	400

Praise for *Virtual Reality*

"Covers everything from the history of computers to the history of the human race. . . . [A] hands-on tour of the ingenious and sometimes wacky ways people have tried to humanize our relationship to computers."

—*The New York Times*

"Traces the rollicking history of alternate-reality fabrication from Plato and Dionysus to the highest tech labs in Japan, America, and Europe. This great encyclopedia is a precious compendium of essential facts and opinions that we shall all be referring to in the years to come."

—*Timothy Leary*

"An exhaustive, thorough look at the evolution of this technological talisman for the electronic fast lane. . . . Rheingold has written a book about inventors and their inventions, [and] about the excitement that occurs among those on the cutting edge of high-tech."

—*San Francisco Chronicle*

"An important book. It's rare for there to be so definitive a coverage of a new technology so early in its growth. Required reading for all the players and would-be players in the games as well as a goodly quantity of technology watchers."

—Stewart Brand, author of *The Media Lab*,
creator of *Whole Earth Catalog*

"There are those who think that virtual reality may be the most important development since man first chipped flint, and there are those who don't know what it is yet. Anybody in doubt should read this book."

—Douglas Adams, author of *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*

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For Mamie Rheingold.
Flower of my heart.
My hope for the future.

CONTENTS

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Part One

A MICROSCOPE FOR THE MIND

