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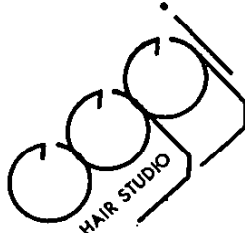


## Salvatore Ventimiglia



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# Computers

Continued from page 31

Major manufacturers include Mattel, Coleco, Ideal, Entex, Milton Bradley and Parker Brothers.

AT THE J-Kay Sales toy store in Redford Township, clerk Vito Manzella presides over a long glass enclosed counter of electronic gadgets.

Some customers just come to look.

"How much is that 'Stop Thief' up there?" asks one.

"\$34.97," says Manzella.

"Yeech."

No sale.

Manzella is not modest about giving a review of the games.

One game that sells for \$50 encourages the player to increase the volume of the simulated engine until the engine "blows."

MANZELLA SAYS it's "dumb."

"All it does is make a lot of noises. I mean it's stupid if you ask me."

Mattel's Horse Race Analyzer for \$100 has stumped even electronic game veterans like Manzella.

"About one o'clock, I started it," he said. "About five o'clock I still couldn't figure it out."

The game provides betting advice after you plug in the pertinent information from published racing sheets.

Like Horse Race Analyzer, a number of the games don't really have age limits.

"Quiz Whiz," for example, has accessory cassettes — at \$6 each — available covering science, math, people and places, sports, books and movies. The game itself sells for \$27.

MATTEL'S ELECTRONIC football and auto race games in 1977 and Milton Bradley's "Simon" in 1978 were the first computer chip games on the market, ac-

cording to the Circus World spokesman.

Since then, many manufacturers have copied those forms and others have tried to cash in on a fad.

"Touch Me" for \$13 is a "Simon copy cat," says Manzella. The players repeat the series of sounds the machine makes.

A "Star Wars" game for \$28 appears to just make a lot of noise as player opponents flash laser lights at each other. "It's disgusting," said Manzella. "It's all the movie."

There are games "straight from the pin-ball arcades," Manzella says and modifications of popular bar games like "Space Invaders."

A "Horoscope Analyzer" for \$50 is "dumb," if you ask Manzella. "You could get the same answer putting a quarter in a machine."

A GAME called "The Generals," is similar to the non-electronic "Stratego." And "Battleship" is now known as "Electronic Battleship."

"They jacked up the price \$20 for the sound," Manzella said.

Sports are big electronic game items. Football, baseball and basketball can be played one-on-one or on the older cheaper games players rotate turns. Soccer, boxing, hockey and car racing are all part of the electronic games set.

But the computer age hasn't swept everyone up.

"People are always going to buy 'Concentration' and games like that," says Manzella.

And those vibrating electric football games where the players go the wrong way?

"They're still making those," Manzella said. "They'll probably make them forever."

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