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ousa
otago uni students' association



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In recent years, a bizarre new subculture has sprung up, based on fandom of the television series My Little Pony: Friendship Is Magic. Its predominantly male, adult membership call themselves bronies. But what do we really know about this group?

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THE UNIVERSITY HAS BEEN WAGING A long-standing war on alcohol consumption among students. In recent years we've seen the death of the Cook, the Toga Parade, the Bowler, Gardies, the Undie 500, Two Beers, Backstage, the Cookathon, the Albert Arms, and couch burning. Following revelations that the Uni has been attempting to strong-arm OUSA out of buying a stake in the Cook (see pages 8 and 10 this week) – a bar that the Uni has publicly declared it would like to remain open – it's worth revisiting this admittedly tired debate.

In 2009 the University Council banned all alcohol advertising from campus. The memorandum circulated to the members of the Council by then-Vice-Chancellor David Skegg before the ban was voted on was a spectacularly patronising and hyperbolic piece of propaganda, which nonetheless had the desired effect. Skegg also oversaw the introduction of Campus Watch and the Code of Conduct, both of which have made campus immeasurably safer at night but also come armed with petty anti-alcohol powers.

Skegg's ham-fisted approach definitely rubbed students up the wrong way. We have a new Vice-Chancellor now in Harlene Hayne. Hayne is far more flexible than Skegg, far more willing to engage with students and OUSA, and far savvier. If Skegg was the haughty patriarch, Hayne is the smiling assassin.

This is nothing personal against Hayne – she's actually lovely – but she is playing the long game here, and she's very good at it. Students

are less likely to get up in arms about the slow death of Scarfie culture if they don't feel as though the University is actively killing it. The odd slip aside (such as her comment that "in an ideal world" people would study instead of going to the Hyde Street keg party), Aunty Harlene puts people at ease. In doing so, she is having a far great impact on student drinking culture than any previous Vice-Chancellor.

Of course, what is meant by "Scarfie culture" should be up for debate, and simply equating the culture with alcohol is damaging and narrow-minded. But just as many students need to learn moderation in their drinking, so should the Uni learn that young people need balance in their lives and a range of experiences, including occasional, unbridled hedonism. By all means, make it safe and supervised – but shutting down our pubs is the wrong approach entirely.

A side note: for some reason, the Dunedin Craft Beer and Food Festival has slipped through the alcohol advertising ban. Just goes to show that the Uni's okay with piss so long as it's suitably gentrified.

On a completely unrelated topic, we're excited to introduce the *Critic* board game to help warm up your flat! The board can be found on the front and back covers of this issue. The game is designed for at least four people, and rounds are expected to last 15–30 minutes. Please feel free to be creative with the rules, and tweak them as you see fit!

Required equipment:

- > One die (if you don't have a die, you can use a random number generator online or download a dice app for your phone).
- > A piece for each player.
- > Large quantities of lemonade.

Rules:

- > Players can move in any direction, but cannot move in more than one direction on the same turn.
- > The winner is the player who has drunk the most lemonade when the game ends.
- > The game ends when one player has jumped over every other player. When this happens, the player in question drinks 10 lemonades, and the winner is decided.
- > A player jumps over another player when they land on or move over a square containing the other player's piece.
- > The game can be played either with a reward system (e.g. landing on a square that reads "3 lemonades" means you are allowed to drink three lemonades) or an allocation system ("3 lemonades" means you tell another player to drink three of their lemonades).
- > Each player picks a "home" square from one of the four corners of the board (Knox, Queen's Gardens, High Street and Aquinas). Multiple players can choose the same home square.
- > Players choose a "rule" for their home square. This can take the form of, for instance, a challenge or an action that a player must perform (e.g. drinking some lemonade, or removing an item of clothing).
- > Whenever one player jumps over another, the latter is sent back to the former's home square. When you are sent to another player's home square, you must abide by the rule that they have chosen. If you refuse to do so, you must give away some of your lemonade.
- > Players stay in the game after they have been jumped. They simply move out from their opponent's home square in the normal manner.



University Book Shop

LETTER OF THE WEEK

The letter of the week wins a \$25 book voucher from the University Book Shop.

Cassio would be proud

Dear Romeo and Juliet.

After a lengthy walk home from town, I finally reached my humble abode. On my front porch was the place at which my life changed forever.

On my front porch, for all the world to see, I witnessed a random bloke (Romeo) playing hide and seek up a girls (Juliet) skirt.

In shock of the experience I stood dumfounded, with the two lovers in between me and my refuge. Ten seconds rolled by before Juliet noticed and her gasp flushed Romeo out from his hiding place, the look on Romeo's face implied they were doing something more than just hide and seek.

After a rushed explanation the star crossed lovers the rushed inside to chat to a mutual friend, ending what was surely a fishy situation.

I would like to give you my congratulations, you take the prize for WORST place to fool around.

Next time, do the decent thing use the Monkey Bar toilets.

Yours truthfully,
Shakespeare.

You read them, you be the judge

Dear Critic,

How in the honest fuck does a complaint letter about student health sent to the wrong mailbox qualify as a "Letter of the week"? Were the other letters really that stiff and boring?

Cheers
XSmithe

Critic's tower is made from the finest ivory

Dear Sir,

In your Editorial you denied knowledge of the Rape Culture when I gave an article on the subject, on paper, recently, and in the spirit of inquiry you might like to read it.

Also re the Bowler you claimed ignorance and bemoaned the lack of institutional knowledge owing to the 'shove them through' policies of the modern age.

Complaining about knowledge walls is one thing. The first step of scaling them is dialogue with strangers, and art none of your staff or you seem capable of, and one which will be essential when you move into the wider world. This lack of openness to real world communication is symptomatic of a wider problem ie age segregation, the ingrowing bunching of peer groups and the great wall of Google between you and your fellow citizens.

Your political education has made you cautious but journalism is not about denial, it's about inquiry. I am happy the literary standard has improved and pissed I'm disenfranchised because my eyes will suffer and die if I spend any length of time with all those little icons on computers, so if there is anything you need to know about student culture in the last 35 years call me in and I am happy to help.

Yours faithfully,
Sue Heap.

Hi Sue,

In my editorial last week I did not deny knowledge of rape culture. Rather, I pointed out that one can complete a politics degree at Otago without ever being introduced to the concept of rape culture, and suggested that this reflects a wider problem with the way that the humanities are taught. As for myself, I have some understanding of rape culture, but what understanding I have did not come from my studies.

Yours sincerely,
Sam McChesney

Fiery debate

I don't understand how Keir Russell managed to get that \$1,500 for his Fire event.

Firstly, wouldn't it be a conflict of interest for an executive member to ask the executive for a grant?

Isn't he there to represent the views of us postgraduate students?

Seems a bit dodgy.

Also \$1,500?

I am among the hundreds (HAHAHA yeah right) who read the list of the clubs and people who got grants.

I'm pretty sure the highest number on there was 1000.

Just seems a bit unfair to all the clubs who had to apply and fundraise through the grants process.

This is probably along the lines of what Ruby and Kamil said.

-Lot\$ of \$en\$e

Kia ora,

Just thought I'd clear up a few points about the emergency grant that was awarded to the Fire and Circus Club.

1- The reason the grant was applied for was that after the arrangements were all made for the trip there was an unexpected change made to our bookings by the ferry company, which would have made the trip impossible.

2- The costs for the trip initially were entirely covered by the club and those going on the trip without requiring an OUSA grant. The late changes however, occurred after the last grants round had already been decided and the next round was too late.

3- The grant still has to be retroactively applied for and any money not awarded in the next grant must be paid back by the club.

4- I am not personally travelling with the club until the very last part of the trip down. I am flying and paying my own way due to my own time commitments, meaning I am not personally benefiting from the grant except from them taking some of my gear.

5- I abstained from voting on the issue.

Regards,
Keir Russell Post-Graduate Officer

Spam of the Week

Dear:

I know your information from Internet.

We offer neckties, bow ties, pocket squares, scarves, suspenders, fabric, suit from Lsilk clothing co., ltd in china.

High quality and services are our superiority. Hope to cooperate with you. thanks

Best Regards
Hebby He
Sales Manager

They're called Bonito Flakes ;)

CRITIC!

I read your BYO review last week. Nom. Those little cute wavy things they put on top of the octopus balls at Yuki are fucking awesome! They just sit there moving! HOW THEY DO THAT!

Anyways,
cool.
J-box

Harsh

THE SHIELD THE SHIELD THE SHIELD THE SHIELD
THE SHIELD THE SHIELD THE SHIELD THE SHIELD
THE SHIELD THE SHIELD THE SHIELD THE SHIELD
THE SHIELD THE SHIELD THE SHIELD THE SHIELD
THE SHIELD. What a lol.

This letter courtesy of the 90% of people who couldn't give a fuck about sport.

Magic 8 balls & devil worshipping

Late Crate Debate Suffocates After Eight Great Speight's-Fuelled Dates With Mates. It's Fate, Says Kate.

How the fuck do you guys come up with this stuff?
4.5/5 stars.

See pretty much all of our news this week

Yo, wtf do the exec even do?

Ever since you've stopped reporting in on their meetings (don't blame you, sounded pretty boring) I have no idea what they do.

As the elections for these positions are all coming up could you do a piece that covers what each role of the exec actually do BEFORE nominations open so anyone interested in running for exec actually knows what position would suit them? The constitution has sweet fuck all about what the roles cover.

Maybe I should've taken those first year POLS papers...

xosexo

trying to get politically active in order to procrastinate.

LETTERS POLICY

Letters should be 200 words or fewer. Deadline is Thursday at 5pm. Send letters to critic@critic.co.nz, post them to PO Box 1436, Dunedin, or drop into the Critic office. All letters must include full contact details, even if you don't want these printed. Letters of a serious nature directly addressing a specific person or group will not be published under a pseudonym, except in extraordinary circumstances negotiated with the Editor. Critic reserves the right to edit, abridge or decline letters without explanation. We don't fix the spelling or grammar in letters. If a writer looks stupid, it's because they are.

Rad small non-dancy energy

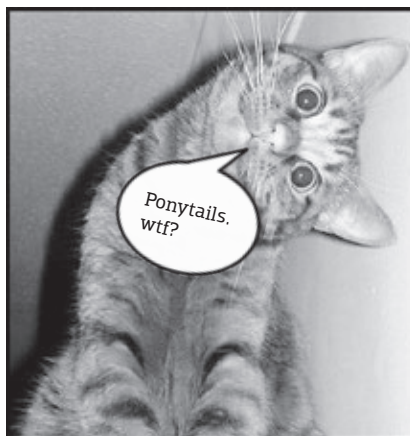
lol are you at critic still? I miss when you were refuels bitch :(lol. twas fun! japandroids were totally rad uuuhhmmm small crowd, not very dancy though but they guys were really awesome and had huge energy the whole time. they had heaps of amps too, totes rockstarry.

lovelove
archine

Inside job?

dear critic, plz have more pictures of cats and coverage of male hair fashions. love cattychin

Dear 'cattychin'



Enjoy

OUSA Farewells Hotties

I just wanted to say that I think it's great that something is being done about negative relationships and the impact that they have on us. I love the hottie idea and I'm excited to share my story and hopefully others feel the same. I've been victimised and bullied. And now it's time to stand up.

Tanya Braythell

High level of skepticism

That weed museum thing is just a random house... is it even zoned for commercial shit?

#danknugz

o.o hey:)// www.bit.ly/f5tDjd

Gotta be in to win? Make a move

Alright critic, I need some advice, can you start a column or something for this shit because I am in some serious help. I've been playing the tinder game, but I've run out of hot boys. I've had lots of matches but I don't want to chat them first, that's too needy. And only the creepy ugly ones are talking to me. I'm too shy to talk to anyone in real life. Please help, I thought that tinder was a way to get a cheeky bang. I'm keen for a fuck but a girls gotta have standards

NOTICES



Young Greens Otago

Young Greens Otago present Metiria Turei at Otago University on Monday 9th September, 11:30pm in the Main Common Room as part of the celebrating 120 years of suffrage (women getting the vote) tour. She will speak about the importance of being active in our communities, of finding your voice on the things you care about, and about the barriers that she overcame because she wanted to have her voice heard for equity and those most vulnerable in our society.

We welcome all to attend.

ousa

OUSA Referendum

OUSA Referendum being held
30 September 2013 – 3 October 2013

Budget Question:

Should the proposed OUSA budget for 2014 be accepted in its entirety?

Budget will be available online for viewing.

OUSA.org.nz.

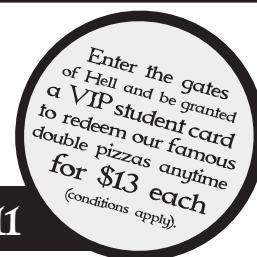
If you have any questions please email

Zac on adminvp@ousa.org.nz



Welcome
to Hell
students...

CALL 0800 666 111



Captain Cook Staggering Back to Life

BY JOSIE COCHRANE

THE CAPTAIN COOK TAVERN WILL BE OPEN again within a year, according to a New Zealand architectural firm.

Edwin Elliot of Elliot Architects confirmed that the company has been hired to draw up plans to convert the pub, which shut its doors in July after 153 years of operation, into a restaurant with an attached bar.

The plans involve keeping the corner of the ground floor and upstairs as a bar/club and installing a separate restaurant on the remaining ground floor area. Earthquake strengthening would also be carried out.

Elliot said he and the owners would "respect the old building," and will "enhance [its] traditional features." The toilets upstairs will also "be getting a tidy up" but the main layout upstairs would remain the same. The open space out the back of the Cook would also be opened up to let more sun in. Overall, he says, "it will look

far better than before."

A smaller bar downstairs will mean that the Cook "will be much more intimate," although *Critic* understands that intimacy has never been an issue there before.

Elliot would not reveal the identity of the new tenant; however, there will possibly be more than one if separate businesses are to operate from the premises.

At the latest OUSA Executive meeting last Tuesday 3 September, it emerged that the Executive is still interested in purchasing a stake in the establishment, and is considering a PledgeMe campaign to raise funds to that end.

OUSA Welfare Officer Ruby Sycamore-Smith's suggested fundraising target of \$500,000, however, is unlikely to put a dent in the cost of refurbishing the building, which is reported to cost millions. Sycamore-Smith suggested the

funds would "incentivise" a third party to buy the Cook.

Even if OUSA did decide to purchase the Cook or another pub, the University has made it clear that they would not support the move unless they could have control over the pub's management. At the last Executive meeting, it was revealed that the University had threatened to withdraw from its Service Level Agreement (SLA) negotiations with OUSA if OUSA were to purchase a pub without the University's involvement.

In February, *Critic* reported that OUSA had met with the University over summer to discuss the possibility of purchasing the Cook and turning it into a student-run pub and venue. Those talks stalled after the asking price for the pub was revealed to be \$6 million.

It could be up to a year away, but watch this space as we await more details regarding the Captain Cook's possible resurrection.

University Bullies OUSA Over Bar

BY SAM MCCHESENEY

THE REVELATION IN LAST TUESDAY'S EXECUTIVE meeting that the University is directing how OUSA spends its reserves is significant, but unsurprising.

OUSA is known to have large reserves, which it could in theory use to purchase a bar with or without the University's approval. However, given that the majority of OUSA's income is earned through its Service Level Agreement (SLA) with the University, and the University is under no obligation to sign the SLA, OUSA has little option but to acquiesce if the University chooses to put its foot down.

Until recently it was not known whether and to what extent the University had been using its powerful bargaining position to direct OUSA's non-SLA spending. However, at the last Executive meeting on Tuesday 3 September it was revealed that the University had threatened

to withdraw from SLA negotiations should OUSA purchase a bar.

The revelation highlights the vulnerable position in which OUSA has been placed following the passage of Voluntary Student Membership (VSM) in 2011. OUSA can no longer require students to join, but retaining as many members as possible is crucial for its continued legitimacy as a voice for Otago students. This means the association has little option but to charge zero membership fees and to instead earn most of its income through contracts with the University. This gives rise to the SLA, whereby all of OUSA's major services are funded through a single, giant agreement.

As *Critic* went to print on Thursday, University figures were unavailable for comment on the recent revelations, whether they believed that OUSA had become too financially dependent

on the University, and whether the University supported the repealing of the VSM legislation.

The University's position on OUSA ownership of a bar is a slap in the face to the association given previous statements by the University. In February, when reports of the Cook's closure first began to arise, Vice-Chancellor Prof Harlene Hayne told *Critic* that "the University appreciates the importance of the Cook to our student community. We would be delighted to see it continue as a pub under responsible host management."

Apparently, in the University's eyes, OUSA does not qualify as "responsible host management," despite the association's strong recent record on safety at events such as Hyde Street and O-Week. The University of Canterbury Students' Association (UCSA) owns a bar, the Foundry. This precedent was pointed out to the University at the time, but made no impression.

Grinch Continues to Ruin EXMSS

BY BELLA MACDONALD

FOLLOWING REVELATIONS ABOUT THE MASSEY University Extramural Students' Society (EXMSS) President's salary, EXMSS is once again under scrutiny after one of its staff was suspended without explanation and a member of the Executive unexpectedly resigned on the eve of an Annual General Meeting.

Last month MASSIVE reported that Jeanette "JV" Chapman, the President of EXMSS, is receiving a salary of \$53,000 for her part-time position. Following the publication of the MASSIVE article, which first appeared online, EXMSS Communications Manager Adam Dodd was suspended. Dodd is also the web manager for MASSIVE, and is responsible for uploading MASSIVE's content to its website.

EXMSS did not respond to *Critic's* request for confirmation of the reasons for the suspension, nor did they clarify the circumstances around the resignation of Executive member Shane Field and the proposed AGM. The AGM was originally scheduled for Thursday 5 September, but was postponed after failing to meet quorum.

Under the Service Level Agreement (SLA) between Massey and EXMSS, Massey grants the association money to be used for web support. Part of the agreement is that all of MASSIVE's content must be available online. With Dodd suspended, MASSIVE's latest issue took over three weeks to be formatted and published online.

Mike Ross, the communications manager for the Massey at Wellington Students' Association (MaWSA), believed that Dodd's suspension was depriving students of their right to access this information. "It's a contractual issue between the Uni, EXMSS and MASSIVE," he stated.

Massey University Communications Director James Gardiner believed the suspension could

potentially have given rise to a breach of the SLA. "But I have not received any information about this apart from your inquiry," Gardiner told *Critic*.

However, Nelson Mail and MASSIVE reporter Sasha Borissenko confirms that she had discussed a potential breach of SLA with Gardiner on 21 August. "Unfortunately I can't go into details for fear of getting the chop, but I definitely did have a grand ol' adrenalin-inducing convo with the big cheese," Borissenko said.

"EXMSS is once again under scrutiny after one of its staff was suspended without explanation and a member of the Executive unexpectedly resigned on the eve of an Annual General Meeting."

Gardiner is responsible for overseeing the allocation of the media grants portion of the levy money collected by Massey University for student services. "MaWSA, which produces MASSIVE, is a grant recipient and the grant assists with the production of MASSIVE magazine. EXMSS, which assists with MASSIVE's online presence, is also a grant recipient," Gardiner explained.

Ross believes that Gardiner's position creates a potential conflict, and gives Massey a way to exert pressure on student media.

"[Gardiner has] rightly become concerned that the JV Chapman story raises questions about oversight of media funding. Given the supposed independence of student media, this is potentially dangerous territory to be in," Ross said.

The suspension also provided a convenient

excuse for Chapman not to stream the much-anticipated AGM, as no one else in the office was capable of setting up such a system. The EXMSS Facebook page went into few details on the matter, explaining only that the communications manager was "not here this week."

EXMSS students expressed concern over the failure to stream the AGM. Given that extramural students are scattered across the country, many were simply unable to attend in person. This was particularly alarming considering Chapman's proposed changes to the Constitution, which were to be voted on at the AGM.

The main proposed changes to the Constitution were reducing the number of Executive members from seven to four, reducing the quorum at Executive meetings from five to four, and reducing the quorum at AGMs from 25 to 20. All of these measures would have increased the ability of the President to pass motions without democratic support. The proposals also included changes to the President's payment structure, with the President to be paid on a fortnightly basis instead of quarterly.

The 2010 EXMSS Constitution states that under Section 6(f), "any officer may be removed from office by a two thirds majority of those voting at an Annual General Meeting (where due notice of such a proposal had been given), or at a properly constituted Special General Meeting [SGM] called for that purpose."

Critic understands that a number of students had applied for an SGM several weeks ago, at which they would be able to vote Chapman out of office with a two-thirds majority. However, the requests for an SGM were ignored by EXMSS.

At the time of print, it was unknown whether the AGM was postponed due to not meeting the quorum for executives or for members, or when the rescheduled AGM will be held.



EXEGRABLE

BY SAM MCCHESENEY

THE AGENDA FOR LAST WEEK'S EXEC MEETING totalled 70 pages, with 27 different items listed. The room had been booked for five hours, but thankfully the meeting "only" lasted three. So, what happened?

1. Serious financial discussions devolved into sugar-fuelled gigglings. Fran kept losing his rag and shouting "order!" at his flighty Exec.
2. Fran tried valiantly to feed *Critic* some lines that would sound good to the Dunedin voting public. *Critic* wasn't playing Fran's game, and will instead print quotes that make him sound like an unhinged terrorist.
3. Campaigns Officer Rachael Davidson was the only one looking vaguely Presidential. Could this be a sign?
4. Admin Vice-President Zac Gawn skulked in the corner contributing little and grumbling about E-Sports, as is his wont.
5. Oh and finally, the Exec fucked up a routine procedural matter and as a result leaked a sizeable quantity of sensitive information to *Critic*. Read on ...

The first substantive item on the agenda was about buses. OUSA and the Otago Regional Council have negotiated a deal to provide free Go Cards to first-years in 2014, in addition to the previously negotiated student bus discount set for a trial period next year. OUSA would pay a discounted 25 per cent rate for these cards. Fran wanted to extend the deal to encompass all students, at an estimated cost of \$25,000.

Rachael and Postgrad Rep Keir Russell pointed out that the cards are only part of the story – the ORC's bus timetables are shit, and unless they are improved, the trial period is unlikely to be successful. (By this point Zac was banging his head against the table and chewing his notes, but the meeting was only a quarter of the way through.)

Fran then threatened to bring "a gun" to his next ORC meeting. "Never go into a meeting without a loaded gun," he declared, causing *Critic* to frantically duck under the table to see if Fran was packing heat. He was, but there was no gun in sight. Fran later assured *Critic* that the gun was "metaphorical." Clearly impressed by his linguistic talents, the Exec authorised Fran to make the ORC an offer they couldn't refuse, and conditionally approved the spending.

\$15,000

OUSA E-Sports Tournament

\$25,000

Free Go Cards for all students

\$45,000

OUSA's NZUSA membership levy

\$2,557,289

2012 Total OUSA Spending

Next, it was decided that a referendum will be held on whether to accept OUSA's proposed 2014 budget, just as soon as the Exec figure out what said budget will actually contain.

Some other boring shit happened for a while, and then Ruby tabled a memorandum proposing a PledgeMe campaign to raise funds to reopen the Cook. Ruby had zero details about how the campaign might work, what the target should be, and what OUSA would look to gain from the venture.

With so little thought and effort having gone into it, the proposal was presumably little more than an attempt by Ruby to burnish her "Scarfie" credentials for the upcoming OUSA elections,

at which she is expected to stand for President against Zac. While clever in a sense – the venture would require little expenditure on OUSA's part, allowing Ruby to claim the "fiscal responsibility" tag from Zac, who would buy a pub outright – the move was half-arsed, sloppy, and led directly to what senior OUSA figures would later label a "clusterfuck."

After the memorandum was tabled, an extensive "filling in the gaps" session took place, given that Ruby had, essentially, presented nothing but gaps.

For those unfamiliar with PledgeMe, it is a system designed to avoid the Prisoners' Dilemma of individual charity. Someone sets an overall fundraising target, and you pledge a donation to the cause; but you only have to pay if the overall target is actually met. Thus, people can avoid wasting money on charity drives that go nowhere (for instance, half-arsed attempts to buy a failed local pub), and will only pay for causes that actually get enough support to make a difference.

A target of \$1 million was floated but quickly rejected as too ambitious, and \$500,000 was proposed in its place. God then spoke to the Exec, and pointed out that the asking price for the Cook was \$6m when the association had approached its owners earlier in the year. What, God asked, would the Exec do with only \$500,000?

Ruby suggested that it would "incentivise" a third party to buy the Cook. "Yeah," Fran said, "we'll just donate it to whoever buys the Cook." (Side note: Fran is running for the Dunedin City Council on a platform of fiscal responsibility.) Thankfully, somebody pointed out how fucking stupid this was – not to mention fucking irresponsible, since it basically amounted to a charitable campaign to get students drunk – and the Exec agreed that OUSA should expect some kind of ownership stake for its 500k (notwithstanding that this 500k a. is purely hypothetical and b. would not really belong to OUSA).

There followed an interesting revelation. It was pointed out that the University was against OUSA owning a pub, and had been using the Service Level Agreement (SLA) – the agreement through which the University funds most of OUSA's activities – as leverage to prevent them from buying one. The only way the University would countenance such a deal, the Exec were reminded, was if the University itself had a stake and could exercise some (read: total) control over how the bar was managed. Cos, you know, drinking's more fun when Aunt Harlene is watching you.

This is the first time that anybody from the Executive has openly acknowledged that the University uses the SLA to exert wider strategic and operational control over OUSA, including how OUSA spends its non-SLA money. In short: OUSA has become the University's bitch.

Education Officer Jordan Taylor pointed out that the Cook was not OUSA's only option in terms of a student-owned pub, but was cryptic about what other venues might be available. *Critic* tried to coax some answers from Zac, who ruled out the garage beneath Clubs and Societies but was notably coy when it came to the Great King Street branch of UBS.

"This is in committee, right?" Ruby suddenly asked. *Critic* replied in the negative.

There was a sharp intake of breath around the room. "Fuck," someone observed.

The Exec had forgotten to move into committee of

the whole – i.e., a closed session that the media is not allowed to report on. Normally all of this information would be buried deeper than Osama Bin Laden's corpse. Whoops – a – daisy, Exec!

"This is in committee, right?' Ruby suddenly asked. Critic replied in the negative.

There was a sharp intake of breath around the room. 'Fuck,' someone observed."

After hastily tabling a motion "That OUSA co-operate with the Otago University and other interested parties to create a PledgeMe to incentivise the establishment of a student bar in North Dunedin," the Exec sheepishly moved into committee. *Critic* cannot report on what was said, but after the Exec came out of committee the motion was withdrawn pending discussions with the University.

Discussion then turned to the DCC's decision to withdraw its polling booth from campus. The polling booth was to be introduced as part of OUSA's Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the DCC, but was scrapped (on extremely flimsy grounds) in the wake of Fran's DCC

candidacy. Rachael whipped out her soapbox and made some salty remarks about the DCC. She noted that the MOU included efforts to increase student participation in local body politics, and pointed to the student enrolment drive that OUSA had been running under her guidance. "What are the DCC bringing to the table?" Rachael demanded, not without justification.

The last item on the agenda was E-Sports, with Zac wanting (again) to pull OUSA's funding for the November E-Sports tournament. This time, his reasoning was that the Exec had not been given sufficient progress reports or justification for how its \$15,000 outlay on E-Sports was being spent. (If Zac were this meticulous in chasing up every \$15,000 of OUSA expenditure, OUSA would be the most well-run and accountable organisation in the world.)

Zac's hardly a Grinch – if anything, his heart is three sizes too large – but this makes his efforts to shit in the E-Sports manger even sadder. He clearly thinks that hating on E-Sports is a vote-winner, and maybe he's right – after all, it's stigmatised and has a ridiculous name – but the elephant in the room here is anti-Asian racism, so Zac needs to tread carefully. In any case, given that the \$15,000 represents just a fraction of a percent of OUSA's total budget, the constant sabre-rattling is just starting to look petty.

At long last, the meeting ended. The Exec filed out, with a few stragglers hanging back to ask *Critic* despairing questions like "are you going to report on this?"

6

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Arrest And Relaxation



Handcuffs Instead Of a Hand Up For Worst Student-loan Defaulters

BY ANNA BRADLEY-SMITH (SALIENT)

STUDENTS HEADING AWAY ON THEIR OE MAY soon face a nasty surprise, with new legislation poised to stop the worst loan-defaulters at the border.

The Student Loan Scheme Amendment Bill (No 3), which would allow for the arrest of those who have defaulted on student-loan repayments, passed its first reading by 61 votes to 59 in Parliament (under urgency) last week.

The Bill is an attempt to reduce government debt (the primary goal outlined in the 2013 Budget) by targeting overseas borrowers and those thinking of heading abroad. If implemented, the Bill would allow the IRD to issue arrest warrants at the New Zealand border for those who have refused to repay their student loans.

Revenue Minister Todd McClay has compared the move to preventing parents with outstanding child support payments from leaving the country, and claims that the threat of arrest would act as an efficient deterrent for those planning to travel overseas without repaying their student debt.

"Similar provisions for student loans

would send a clear message to all borrowers that non-compliance is unacceptable, and there are real consequences for ignoring repayment responsibilities," said McClay.

As well as imposing tougher measures on serious student-loan defaulters, the Bill proposes fixed repayment obligations for New Zealanders based overseas and suggests new thresholds that would increase repayment obligations. In order to enforce the new legislation, the Bill would see increased information sharing between government departments, with the contact details of those applying for passports being provided to the IRD.

This interdepartmental sharing would allow for greater exchange of the personal information of all students with loans. As the Student Loan Scheme Act 2011 does not allow for the sharing of contact details of borrowers not in default, the Bill contains an amendment enabling the Commissioner of the IRD to obtain the contact details of all those borrowing under the scheme.

McClay says that this is to prevent

overseas-based borrowers from falling into default, and that "with accurate contact details, Inland Revenue can educate borrowers about their obligations and put early intervention [measures] in place."

The Bill's reception has been mixed, with Opposition Spokesperson for Revenue David Cunliffe stating that the Bill is "an erosion of civil liberties," and Green Party MP Holly Walker labelling the policy "dangerous" and "unnecessarily punitive."

One student spoken to by Salient, Zac Sanderson-Harris, views IRD issuing arrest warrants as "overboard" and "extreme."

"It is fair to have to pay [student loans] off while overseas, but the new legislation could intimidate those with loans from dealing with IRD."

The Finance and Expenditure Select Committee must now consider the Bill before further legislative progress can be made. Their report, which will affect the over 70 per cent of current tertiary students who have a student loan, is due by 27 February 2014.

Bus Trial to Cost Far Less Than Actual Bus

BY ZANE POCKOCK

THE TRIAL FOR TERTIARY STUDENT DISCOUNT bus fares set up by OUSA, OPSA and the Otago Regional Council (ORC) is expected to cost the ORC up to \$15,000. Ratepayers have been assured, however, that they will not be hit in the pocket.

ORC Chairman Stephen Woodhead put the trial "in perspective" by identifying that the council's total transport spending for the year would be approximately \$10 million.

Councillors have moved quickly to show

their support for the scheme, an effort that *Critic* speculates may be due in part to the recent push by the DCC and OUSA to get more students enrolled to vote in the upcoming local body elections.

Cr Michael Deaker emphasised that the 18,000 students living in Dunedin show "a real prospect of improving patronage figures," and described the trial as "exciting" considering that students may now move further away from University when choosing where to live.

Slightly more reserved, Cr Sam Neill thought the trial was "overdue," but felt that it would need to be matched by a concerted and "massive" effort to let students know what was available. Cr Lucy Lawless was unavailable for comment.

The two-month trial is set to occur between Orientation Week and the end of April, and will give students a 25 per cent discount when using a Go Card. Promotions and specific system requirements have not yet been finalised.

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Students Learn to Appear Good and Fuck the World Discreetly

BY ZANE POCKOCK

DISCIPLINARY FIGURES RELEASED TO THE Otago Daily Times last week under the Official Information Act show that student behaviour for the first half of 2013 has significantly improved when compared to the same period last year.

Only five students were referred to Vice-Chancellor Prof Harlene Hayne in the year to the end of July, eight fewer than were referred in the corresponding period last year. Students are referred to the Vice-Chancellor "only in the most serious disciplinary cases."

The five students seen by Hayne this year were involved in three separate incidents, and each were excluded from the University for between one and two semesters.

The number of students seen by the Provost,

5 Students

Referred to the VC for serious disciplinary cases in the year to July 2013
(8 fewer than previous year)

who is the senior academic administrator of the University, dropped from 20 to seven. The Provost generally deals with severe academic misdemeanours.

Students referred to the Proctor totaled 247, down from 271 over the same period last year. While this represents the smallest decline in numbers, this figure includes Otago Polytechnic students and non-students caught trespassing on University property.

In contrast, the number of University students

finished by the Proctor's office declined from 77 to 39, with a drop in total fines from \$8,030 last year to \$5,585 this year.

Total numbers disciplined for starting fires also dropped to 28 students in the first half of this year, down from last year's 60.

OUSA President Francisco Hernandez was "pleased" by the drop in students being disciplined.

"The feedback we've had from police, the University and the wider community is that in general University of Otago students are behaving well and trouble-makers are a minority," Hernandez told the *ODT*.

The University's student services office felt that it was "too early to pinpoint the reasons for the decline."

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Words Superimposed Onto Ad

BY JAMIE BREEN



THIS SATURDAY WILL HOST AN EVENT designed to bridge the gap between Dunedin's "town and gown" student population and the general public. The Dunedin Craft Beer and Food Festival, to be held on 14 September, is described by the event organisers as "an evolving platform upon which craft brewers can come together under one roof to showcase their products alongside a selection of the finest local food backed up by top Kiwi music."

Held at Forsyth Barr Stadium, the event will showcase over 50 unique beverages from over 30 breweries, and more than 15 different food providers. Beers exclusive to the festival will also be present. Emerson's brewery has been working with Whittaker's to create a chocolate stout, incorporating cocoa nibs supplied by Whittaker's, which will feature as the exclusive "festival brew."

OUSA figures described the event as "something a little bit different, fusing the popularity and great food of the food festivals we run with the more refined 'quality over quantity' attitude that comes with the craft beer and cider lovers."

The festival is not all about beer tasting, however – seminars will be held throughout the

day to educate visitors about production techniques and professional beer tasting methods. There will also be a home brew competition, with the winner being awarded the opportunity to brew the following year's "festival brew." Farra Fabrication will also be doing a live brew on the day.

A selection of New Zealand musicians – including Sola Rosa, Two Cartoons, Matt Langley, Sympathy Bells and The Kaikorai Metropolitan Bavarian Band – are set to perform live. There will also be a large range of food, including waffles, pizza, churros and breads.

The mix of music, beer and food is expected to bring around 3,000 people under the roof of the Forsyth Barr Stadium. Travellers from Auckland, Christchurch and Wellington are also set to attend, thanks to a partnership deal run by Air New Zealand's Grabaseat Getaways service.

Breweries from the North Island will also be featured in the festival. "There will be a sprinkling of North Island breweries such as Liberty and Yeastie Boys. Once we got momentum we found they were keen to be here supported by their distributors, and they're so good we couldn't not let them in."

These moves come after criticism over Lion Nathan's partnership in the festival, which led to the inclusion of Speights in the event. A self-described "beer snob" told *Critic* he was "relieved" to see this partnership taking a back seat in favour of "true craft beers."

"I think [the organisers] have done a really good job of balancing their commercial obligations with the spirit of a craft beer festival."

The festival may become an annual feature, depending on the success of this inaugural effort. "This is the first year ... the festival has happened, and we are extremely happy with the progress behind the scenes and the support from the greater Dunedin city. Because of this we intend to continue to develop the event for future years," OUSA told *Critic*.

Emerson's spokesperson Jane Hyde felt that "beer festivals are a hugely popular phenomenon now and it's pretty exciting that Otago is going to have one of its own."

Student tickets are \$19.90, plus a booking fee. A sizeable student turnout is expected.

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Miss Jane

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have a camera
Mr Spielberg?



Council to Railroad Cars Into Cycle Lanes

BY JACK MONTGOMERIE

THE DUNEDIN CITY COUNCIL LOOKS SET TO implement a transport strategy focusing on cycling, walking and public transport in the downtown area. However, a group representing local businesses has accused the strategy of neglecting its needs, prompting a sharp online response from the Mayor.

The DCC's hearings subcommittee received 64 submissions from individuals and organisations before it produced the draft transport strategy, which outlines the Council's plans for transport infrastructure and rules for the next 30 years. The strategy outlines seven key objectives:

1. An affordable, responsive, effective and safe road network.
2. Affordable and convenient public transport.
3. Good connections for business and freight, including excellent connections to key gateways.
4. Sustainable transport choices and a reduced dependence on oil for transport.
5. Efficient movement of vehicles and freight.
6. Urban form and design that creates high levels of accessibility to key destinations.
7. A safe and pleasant place to walk and cycle.

The Otago Chamber of Commerce CEO John Christie said that the Chamber consulted a number of "wise heads" before deciding that the draft strategy failed to emphasise the need for an uninterrupted freight link to the port. The current strategy allows for the possibility of a heavy traffic bypass on the east of the city.

Alexis Belton, co-founder of the Feet Street group, which submitted in favour of pedestrianising downtown areas, claimed that "pedestrianisation myths" were "empirically unfounded," and offered Auckland's Vulcan Lane as a successful example that Dunedin should follow. His group believed that increases in foot traffic would offset any difficulties resulting from the changes, which would "produce a more pleasant urban space." Belton claimed that the owners of Mac's Brew Bar were one of several businesses who supported the idea.

Christie said the Chamber's members were alarmed by suggestions that the Octagon and parts of George Street could be pedestrianised,

as this would likely make stocking and servicing businesses harder for downtown retailers. He said inner-city businesspeople also worried that pedestrianisation would discourage shoppers from coming to the inner city.

The strategy's "Focus on Freight" section claims that the "Your City, Our Future" survey carried out by the Council in 2011 suggested that Dunedinites wanted "improved rail services in Dunedin and more use of rail for freight movement."

In fact, a summary report of the survey (which involved some 4,000 citizens) released at the time stated that "advocating for better connections in and out of the city (e.g. flights into the city, rail transport, state highways)" received a mean public rating of 3.62/5, compared to a mean of 3.33/5 for "improving cycling facilities."

Christie said that while the Chamber is supportive of cycleways in principle, cycleways can endanger both cyclists and motorists if poorly designed. The Chamber also believes that the draft strategy "had a heavy leaning towards more cycleways, issues around sustainability, and yet the base documentation wasn't there to support those."

Christie was concerned that the strategy "makes assumptions that can't be validated by the facts." He believed that the document's assumption that "fuel prices will continue to increase" ignores the growing efficiency of vehicles.

Dr. Herbert Harris, one of several transport consultants and traffic engineers commissioned by the Chamber to write a submission, was more damning. He called the strategy "akin to a reading study" that "even in this role ... is inadequate." Harris recommended the strategy be rewritten by a joint working party consisting of the DCC and the Chamber of Commerce.

While Christie said the Chamber is generally pleased with Cull's performance as Mayor, His Worship used Facebook to express his displeasure, fuming that "our local Chamber of Commerce ... seems stuck in a smoke stack industry time warp."

The Transport Strategy will go to a full council vote on 23 September, the last time the council meets before local body elections on 12 October.



The Harry Potter Issue

BY ZANE POCKOCK

Kiwi stranded on island by crocodile

DID THE CROCODILE SWIM ACROSS TO NEW Zealand, or was a small kiwi subspecies recently discovered in Australia? A scared New Zealand kayaker is much less impressive now, isn't it?

Pike River families will be relieved: PM

Personally, I don't really like the idea of my burial site becoming a family toilet, but each to their own I guess.



The introduction of a new full-page column by Judy Bailey is best described by comments from the *Critic* office: "That's a fall from grace!" and "I thought she died in the Solomon Islands last year?"

If team learns lessons from loss, all is not totally lost

You poets, you! SPORT!

Yosemite wildfire obscures the view

At least the *ODT* got their priorities right this week.

Switched On Museum to Bring Prostitution, Gambling

BY JOSIE COCHRANE

THE MARIJUANA MUSEUM OF DUNEDIN, FOUNDED by Abe Gray of Otago Norml and Julian Crawford of the Aotearoa Legalise Cannabis Party (ALCP), opens its doors this week to educate locals and tourists on the world of cannabis. Crawford is also a candidate for the Otago District Health Board (DHB) and the Dunedin City Council (DCC). He intends to push for the legalisation of marijuana and has high hopes of creating a "Dunsterdam" in the future.

The museum is located at 66 David Street, South Dunedin, and is open during standard working hours. Exhibitions will rotate throughout the year, with the first display showcasing what Crawford describes as "the unique Kiwi style of spotting, which is uncommon overseas," complete with stoves, heated knives and anatomically moveable mannequins.

Among many ideas for future exhibits is a display of the different types of growing chambers used in NZ, such as wall cut-outs and the inside of computers.

The museum's research library contains over 100 books on the history and use of cannabis, many of which are not available in other public libraries. Computers and free WiFi are also in place to allow open access to further research. Gray says that the museum intends to make PDF versions of all of the books available so that visitors can bring in USB drives and make copies of the information.

The building is also home to the new base of the ALCP. The offices will include a broadcasting studio and a computer suite for running the organisation's electoral campaigns next year.

Entry to the museum will be free of charge – it is being funded purely by donations "from generous people who support the legalisation of marijuana and the work we do," Gray explains. Merchandise will also be sold at the museum, including t-shirts and "glass vases."

Dunedin was chosen as the home for the museum

as Gray and Crawford both plan on staying here for a while. Gray explained that "jobs are hard to come by as graduates, so we created jobs for ourselves and for others." The pair also claims that Dunedin has a history as the most active centre in New Zealand for advocating cannabis legalisation, so the museum celebrates previous efforts.

Sergeant Edward Baker of the Dunedin Police denies having heard about the museum, despite reports in the *Otago Daily Times* that "police would be paying the museum a visit." However, he says that "we have no issues with it, so long as no criminal activity is taking place."

"Dutch-style cannabis cafes would go well in red light areas here. We've got prostitution and gambling so we might as well go the whole way."

Referring to what they call "Dunsterdam," Crawford and Gray say they would like to see Dunedin become the "Amsterdam of the South Pacific." Crawford argues that "Dutch-style cannabis cafes would go well in red light areas here. We've got prostitution and gambling so we might as well go the whole way."

Gray was a little more reserved, stating that "my focus is the cannabis element. I think a lot of neighbourhoods would like a cannabis café." He would like to at least see a small enclave "so as not to offend people" but he believes that "the generational change people talk about is happening. I think Dunedin is ready for it."

Gray believes a "Dunsterdam" would bring in "higher calibre tourists who stay in hotels and spend money, instead of campers" (who spend less money – perhaps because they are not high).

In regards to his campaign for a position on the DHB, Crawford is not aware of how other

members of the DHB or the DCC feel about medicinal marijuana. "I will just have to await the support from the public, then work on convincing the others."

The main objective of Crawford's campaign is to push through the legalisation of medicinal marijuana. The only cannabis drug that may be prescribed in New Zealand is Sativex, a mouth spray containing cannabis extracts. However, as Sativex is not funded by Pharmac, it costs users about \$600 a month to use, and is therefore out of the reach of many. Possession of raw cannabis in any form is still illegal, including for those with a Sativex prescription.

Doctors in a growing number of countries around the world, including the United States and Germany, are now legally prescribing cannabis for people suffering from cancer, MS, chronic pain, glaucoma and HIV.

Crawford explains that the biggest obstacle to the introduction of medical marijuana is the fact that no company can patent the plant. Pharmaceutical companies therefore refuse to pay for the research, as the information generated cannot be copyrighted.

In 2011, The New Zealand Law Commission found that "there are significant differences of opinion on whether unprocessed cannabis should be available for therapeutic use and that this would not be resolved until randomised control trials were launched." It stated that cannabis should not be a special case, but should be treated in the same way as other controlled drugs that have medicinal uses.

Dr Kim Maia, director of Student Health, told *Critic* that "we do see students with problems in their academic and personal lives who have failed to link it with their use of cannabis." Maia believes there are bigger problems, though. "The king of drugs is alcohol. Absolutely, no question, alcohol is more of a problem."

OUSA to Pad Eleven More CVs

BY STAFF REPORTER

NOMINATIONS FOR POSITIONS ON THE 2014 OUSA Executive are now open until 4pm on 19 September, with voting to take place from 31 September to 4pm on 3 October.

There are 11 positions on the Executive. In addition to the full-time position of President, there are four 20-hour positions (Administrative Vice-President, Finance Officer, Welfare Officer, and Education Officer) and five 10-hour positions (Recreation Officer, Campaigns Officer, Colleges and Communications Officer, International Officer, and Postgrad Rep).

The eleventh position on the Executive is the Te Roopu Maori President, who is elected by members of Te Roopu Maori and sits as an ex officio member.

Candidates are allowed to stand for no more than two positions. Candidates must be nominated and seconded by two other students, and all three must bring their student ID cards to the OUSA office to enrol.

All candidates must attend a rules briefing after the nomination period closes. A precise time for this meeting has yet to be confirmed. Candidates are also encouraged to send a blurb to *Critic* for publication, which must be no more than 200 words for Presidential candidates and no more than 100 words for all other positions.

A Presidential debate will be held in the Main Common Room at 5:30pm on Tuesday 24 September. The debate will offer pizza as a bribe for attending. This will be followed by a

candidates' debate for the Administrative Vice President, Finance, Welfare, and Education positions at 1pm the following day; and another debate for the Recreation, International, Campaigns, and Colleges positions at 1pm on the Thursday. It is unclear whether these debates will involve pizza, or whether anybody will attend.

Questions regarding nominations should be directed to the OUSA secretary, Donna Jones (479 5331/ donna@ousa.org.nz).

Any other questions about the elections should be directed to the returning officer, Tom Harries (027 245 7227/ returningofficer@ousa.org.nz).

The Syrian Question

OPINION BY GUY MCCALLUM

THE "SYRIAN QUESTION" PRESENTS A MORAL dilemma for the Western world, which as I write sits poised to intervene in a Middle Eastern civil war. Do we jump in to save innocent lives? Or do we prevent World War III by staying home? According to the mainstream media, the majority of Western countries are against intervention. Considering everything else that is reported about the Syrian civil war, I can't begin to understand why.

Assad's regime monitors personal communications in order to root out dissent, and shuts down various websites it doesn't like. Amnesty International reports that speaking out against the regime usually leads to imprisonment, torture or even execution. Syrians are not free, and neither are their neighbours. When Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri (a leading figure in the 2005 Cedar Revolution that ended a 29-year Syrian occupation) took a stand for

independence, he was blown up by a car bomb. If the West decides to stay home, conditions will only get worse.

If it happened here ...

It is significant that Russia and Iran, themselves studies in totalitarianism, are backing Assad's regime. Let's reflect on what these countries do. Let's reflect on Russia's brutal pogrom against LGBTI persons, the increasing influence of the misogynistic Russian Orthodox Church, and Iran's version of Islamism, which is against any freedoms (that you and I enjoy) that are not compatible with the Ayatollah's interpretation of the Qur'an.

With thugs like these for friends, it's no wonder the Syrians are screaming for help.

Intervention is not inherently a bad thing, and a distinction is useful. Assad's Ba'athist regime is known to be brutal and expansionist – there are clear similarities here with the

doctrines of fascism and lebensraum. American intervention in the Middle East is premised on the idea that a line must be drawn between a country railing against US foreign policy, on the one hand, and brutally targeting its own civilians, on the other, and has paved the way for moderates to establish strong democracies.

Another World War is always close – closer still now that powers like Russia, North Korea and Iran are trying to take control. Chamberlain tried diplomacy; look how that turned out. What makes us think this case is any different? Protecting Syrian innocents from being mulched into statistics is clearly the right thing to do, and if WWII begins because of this, at least we will go in as the good guys.

If the West intervenes for the good, we will encourage good people in bad countries to do the same.



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justdelete.me

A directory of direct links to delete your
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critic.co.nz/flagfood

National flags created from the foods
with which each country is commonly
associated.

critic.co.nz/butterfield

If you haven't seen "Butterfield Detective
Agency," you're missing out.

critic.co.nz/chicksrule

Chicks Rule: Gender balance on social
networking sites.

critic.co.nz/frackingexp

Fracking explained: opportunity
or danger?

partycloud.fm

A DJ mixer for Soundcloud

NEWS IN BRIEFS

ZANE POCOCK | SAM CLARK | LUCY GAUDIN

WORLD WATCH

DAWSON CITY, YUKON, CANADA. | A patron at Dawson City's Downtown Hotel swallowed a human toe with his shot of whiskey. The Sourtoe Cocktail – for which the city is famous – can be any drink, so long as it contains a preserved human toe. Your lips must touch the toe when drinking it, but swallowing it results in a fine.

OXFORD, ENGLAND. | "Twerking" is set to be included in the latest update of the Oxford Dictionary.



LONDON, ENGLAND. | London's new "Walkie Talkie" building has become infamous for focusing reflected light across the street at temperatures high enough to fry eggs and melt a Jaguar's exterior. What's more, the same architect was responsible for the exact same problem in Las Vegas three years ago.



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9-15 September

BY JESSICA BROMELL

THIS WEEK, PEOPLE SAY A LOT OF THINGS – some more useful than others.

14 September, 1752: In the British Empire, this day came after 2 September. This was due to the adoption of the Gregorian calendar, the one that's still used today, in place of the Julian calendar. Because Britain changed calendars a couple of hundred years after almost everyone else, they had to correct by a few more days. Apparently, though, the claims that rioters flooded the streets demanding, "give us back our eleven days," are untrue, and the general population was in fact a bit smarter than that.

15 September, 1835: The HMS *Beagle* reached the Galápagos Islands carrying none other than Charles Darwin, and subsequently became far more famous than it might otherwise have been. It was Darwin's observations of the Islands' endemic species that led to his theory of evolution by natural selection: everyone's heard about the tortoises, but some birds were important too (Darwin's finches have their own Wikipedia page). Darwin was a bit unsure about his theory, famously writing "I think" next to some drawings in one of his notebooks, but with the current evidence one suspects that he was probably right.

9 September, 1947: Some computer at Harvard stopped working properly, and investigation into the failure revealed the

first recorded computer bug. It wasn't a cute little metaphor either, but an actual bug – a poor, innocent moth had gotten stuck in the computer somehow. The incident (if you could call it that) is the reason we use the phrase "computer bug," and has been immortalised in the Smithsonian Museum, where the computer's logbook, complete with moth, is on display.

10 September, 2001: Charles Ingram, a former British Army major who participated in a number of reality TV programmes, allegedly cheated his way to winning the one million pounds on *Who Wants to be a Millionaire?* He was accused of having his wife and an accomplice cough when the correct answer to each question was read out, which seems like a very amateur kind of strategy. He ended up being convicted of deception, and says he's been suffering ever since.

11 September, 2007: Russia tested the largest conventional weapon ever, as Russia is wont to do. It's technically called the Aviation Thermobaric Bomb of Increased Power, but is generally referred to as the Father of All Bombs: it's the equivalent of 44 tons of TNT. The bomb is thought to have a similar effect to that of a small nuclear weapon, and someone from the Russian armed forces described its capabilities in the following terms: "it simply evaporates everything that's alive." That's one for the dash cams.

FACTS & FIGURES

&

In film credits, "and" and "&" mean two different things. If two writers' names are joined with "&" then they collaborated on the script, but if they're joined with "and" it means they worked on it at different times.

"The sixth sick sheik's sixth sheep's sick"

is the world's hardest tongue twister, according to the *Guinness Book of World Records*.



New data released in the journal *Oxford Economic Papers* reveals that the average height of European males has grown by 11cm in just over a century.

23 and 69

The ages at which humans tend to be happiest.

Studies indicate that a woman's chance of getting cancer increases with her height. On average, for every four inches of height gained, there is a 13 per cent increase in the chance of getting any form of cancer. For certain cancers the increase is as large as 30 per cent.



American war veterans kill themselves at a rate of one every 80 minutes.

This rate is 25 times higher than the rate of soldiers killed in combat.



Pluto's orbital period is 248 Earth years. Between the time it was discovered and unclassified as a planet, Pluto did not even complete one revolution around the sun.



THE GREAT DEBATE: DO VIDEO GAMES MAKE US VIOLENT?

BY BAZ MACDONALD

THE LATEST INSTALMENT OF THE CONTROVERSIAL VIDEO GAME SERIES *GRAND THEFT AUTO* IS TO BE RELEASED ON 17 SEPTEMBER. *CRITIC'S* GAMING EDITOR BAZ MACDONALD TACKLED THE QUESTION OF WHETHER *GTA* AND OTHER VIDEO GAMES ARE MAKING US VIOLENT.



ON 8 DECEMBER 1980, A 22-YEAR-OLD

Texan man finally succumbed to the irresistible pull of entertainment. Consumed by thoughts that were not his own, but rather those of his favourite protagonist (of whom he believed he was the living embodiment), he became convinced that he needed to kill a number of iconic figures, some of whom he hated but most of whom he adored.

Early that morning, he left his hotel room carrying only a .38 special revolver and a copy of the story that had so captured him. Signing the book as the protagonist and inscribing "This is my statement" on the inside, he waited outside the Dakota Apartments for a full day before his target arrived. Taking a knee, he put five bullets into the back of his victim before waiting calmly for the police to arrive, his most prized possession clasped tightly in his hands. His name was Mark David Chapman. The story that consumed him was J. D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*. And the man he killed was John Lennon.

The Catcher in the Rye is one of the most infamous pieces of twentieth-century literature,

and has been implicated in a number of violent acts, including the murder of John Lennon and the attempted assassination of US President Ronald Reagan. So what is it about this novel that so incites violence? Does it subconsciously command people to commit such acts? Or is it simply emotionally and intellectually evocative enough that unstable readers are sometimes adversely influenced by its content?

Despite the theorists who contend that Salinger wrote his novel in order to affect people in this way, the second option is clearly the more accurate. All entertainment, if skilfully executed, has the potential to provoke powerful emotional and intellectual responses in those that engage with it. 99 per cent of the time, such responses take the form of tears or laughter. For a minute portion of the population, however, they can result in far more serious outcomes. This was the case with Mark David Chapman.

There is no doubt that Chapman was mentally unstable before ever setting eyes on *The Catcher in the Rye*: a brief survey of his life history reveals a flood of potential exacerbating factors and a number of suicide attempts. Yet the death of

John Lennon did not lead to an inquiry into the American health services. Rather, the blame for his death was placed squarely at the feet of Salinger's novel.

This is nothing new. Politicians and the media have always jumped on entertainment as a convenient scapegoat for such tragedies. Events like this understandably scare us, and we have an inherent need to explain away scary

of gamers and the uninformed assumptions of non-gamers. The occasional violent act, like Chapman's shooting of John Lennon, has resulted in a persistent and heavy-handed monitoring of the gaming industry.

I started this article with the story of Mark David Chapman to illustrate three points: firstly, that all forms of entertainment have the potential to influence people in a negative way; secondly,

that those who respond adversely are primarily those with severe mental illnesses; and thirdly, that video games are simply the current target of such vilification.

Every manifestation of entertainment has

been scrutinised in order to determine the effects it may have on us. Even the basic written word, which marked our ascent as a civilised species,

was closely analysed by the greatest thinkers of the time: Socrates once warned that "this discovery of yours will create forgetfulness in the learners' souls, because they will not use their memories; they will trust to the external written characters and not remember of themselves." Video games are currently in their infancy, and it is during this stage that we will discover exactly how they affect us and what future effect they may have.

The question that really needs asking is whether video games are adversely influencing us in ways that other forms of entertainment are not. In other words, is the violence portrayed in many modern games making gamers themselves violent? This debate has flared on a number of occasions, most notably in 1999 (when the Columbine High School massacre was blamed on the game *Doom*) and 2011 (when Anders Breivik, the man responsible for the Oslo attacks, claimed that he had trained by playing *Call of Duty*). On both of these occasions, video game violence

was spotlighted by the media. Left unmentioned, however, was the fact that video games have been the subject of numerous scientific studies, some of which point to their inherent value and positive potential.

No doubt everybody who reads this will have witnessed the denigration of video games in one form or another. Hell, you may even have contributed to it. These tirades typically take the form of opinion pieces, or discussions between self-serving politicians and concerned parents on various talk shows. However, while such forums are certainly great places in which to raise concerns related to entertainment media, it must be remembered that it is scientific research that determines the validity of these ideas, not the ideas themselves.

In 30 years of gaming, research conducted by reputable scientific figures and reviewed by authorities such as the US Supreme Court, the US Surgeon General and the Federal Communications

Commission has so far failed to confirm a link between video games and violence. A wealth of inquiry has led to this conclusion, and yet paranoia around the pernicious effects of this form of entertainment persists.

In "The Public Health Risks of Media Violence: A Meta-Analytic Review," published in the *Journal of Paediatrics*, Christopher Ferguson and John Kimbarn argue that "analysis does not find support for either a causal

or correlational link between violent media and subsequent aggression in viewers." They conclude that "why the belief of media violence effects persists despite inherent weaknesses of research is somewhat of an open question."

On the contrary, analysis has found that "violent crime, particularly among the young, has decreased dramatically since the early 1990s. During the same period of time, video games have steadily increased in popularity and use, exactly the opposite of what one would expect

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ideas. If we were honest with ourselves, careful consideration of the question would likely lead us to re-examine almost every aspect of our existence, from the way we raise our families to the way we structure our very society. We aren't interested, however, in these sorts of difficult solutions; instead, we happily accept the answer offered to us by the media, and blame the books we read, the movies we watch, and, most often, the games we play.

In her book *Do Video Games Kill?*, sociologist Karen Sternheimer concludes that "by focusing so heavily on video games, news reports downplay the broader social contexts. While a handful of articles note the roles that guns, poverty, families, and the organisation of schools may play in youth violence in general, when reporters mention research to explain the shooters' behaviour, the vast majority of studies cited concern media effects."

Being the games editor of this illustrious magazine and an avid game enthusiast in general, it is the media's treatment of video games that interests me most. In the 30 years since video games first became popular, the medium has been subjected to to almost every form of scrutiny possible, and while most of this scrutiny is fair, much of it is prejudiced. Additionally, much of the criticism directed at video games is prompted by the misadventures

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"VIOLENT CRIME, PARTICULARLY AMONG THE YOUNG, HAS DECREASED DRAMATICALLY SINCE THE EARLY 1990S. DURING THE SAME PERIOD OF TIME, VIDEO GAMES HAVE STEADILY INCREASED IN POPULARITY AND USE, EXACTLY THE OPPOSITE OF WHAT ONE WOULD EXPECT IF THERE WERE A CAUSAL LINK."

if there were a causal link." It is a big call to say that video games make people less violent, but research published last month in the *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* suggests that this may in fact be the case.

Clinical psychologist Dr Ferguson, based at Stetson University in Florida, studied 377 children who were suffering from some form of elevated attention deficit or depressive symptoms to see if violent video games made them more angry or aggressive. No doubt he expected that these games would have an adverse impact on these children. However, his results showed the opposite, and suggested that in many cases "playing the violent games was cathartic, helping to reduce their aggressive tendencies and bullying behaviour."

This sounds ludicrous, but an explanation may be found in displacement theory. Displacement theory recommends substituting a socially unacceptable action with one that channels the release of similar emotions but is more widely accepted. Common examples include athletic exercises such as boxing, which are often recommended for people with anger issues. It makes sense that violent video games might work in a similar way, acting as conduits through which people can vent their pent-up emotions without harming themselves or others.

More baffling than the fact that video games continue to be attacked despite the lack of evidence regarding their negative effects is the fact that the wealth of research indicating their positive effects is largely ignored. The number of improvements being made by gaming companies is staggering; it seems that every possible field is finding ways to capitalise on our desire to game. Video games are being designed to aid in scientific research. For example, *Galaxy Zoo* asks players to identify the shapes and types of

various galaxies, hereby outsourcing data analysis that is unable to be done by computers.

More important than the benefits video games can have for society as a whole, however, are the benefits they can have for us as individuals. Current research indicates that many gamers become more proficient at performing a range of tasks.

A study conducted at the University of Rochester and published in *Current Biology* found that the reflexes of gamers who played fast-paced games were, on average, 25 per cent faster than the non-gaming control group, with each group demonstrating an equal level of accuracy.

The potential advantages of this for everyday life are obvious, especially when it comes to dangerous tasks such as driving. However, these results also have implications for a number of professional fields, particularly those requiring acute motor skills. A study carried out by the Beth Israel Medical Centre in New York found that surgeons who played more than three hours of video games a week "made 47 per cent fewer errors, performed 39 per cent faster and scored 41 per cent better on the overall 'Top Gun' score." I don't know about you, but I sure as hell want a gamer performing my surgeries.

"SURGEONS WHO PLAYED MORE THAN THREE HOURS OF VIDEO GAMES A WEEK 'MADE 47 PER CENT FEWER ERRORS, PERFORMED 39 PER CENT FASTER AND SCORED 41 PER CENT BETTER ON THE OVERALL TOP GUN SCORE.' I DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU, BUT I SURE AS HELL WANT A GAMER PERFORMING MY SURGERIES."

Playing video games also affects us psychologically, and has the ability to both enhance our cognitive abilities and enable us to deal with seemingly insurmountable situations. For example, the game *Re:Mission* has been designed to help children with cancer deal with their illness: players take on the role of a white blood cell, and aim to hunt down and destroy

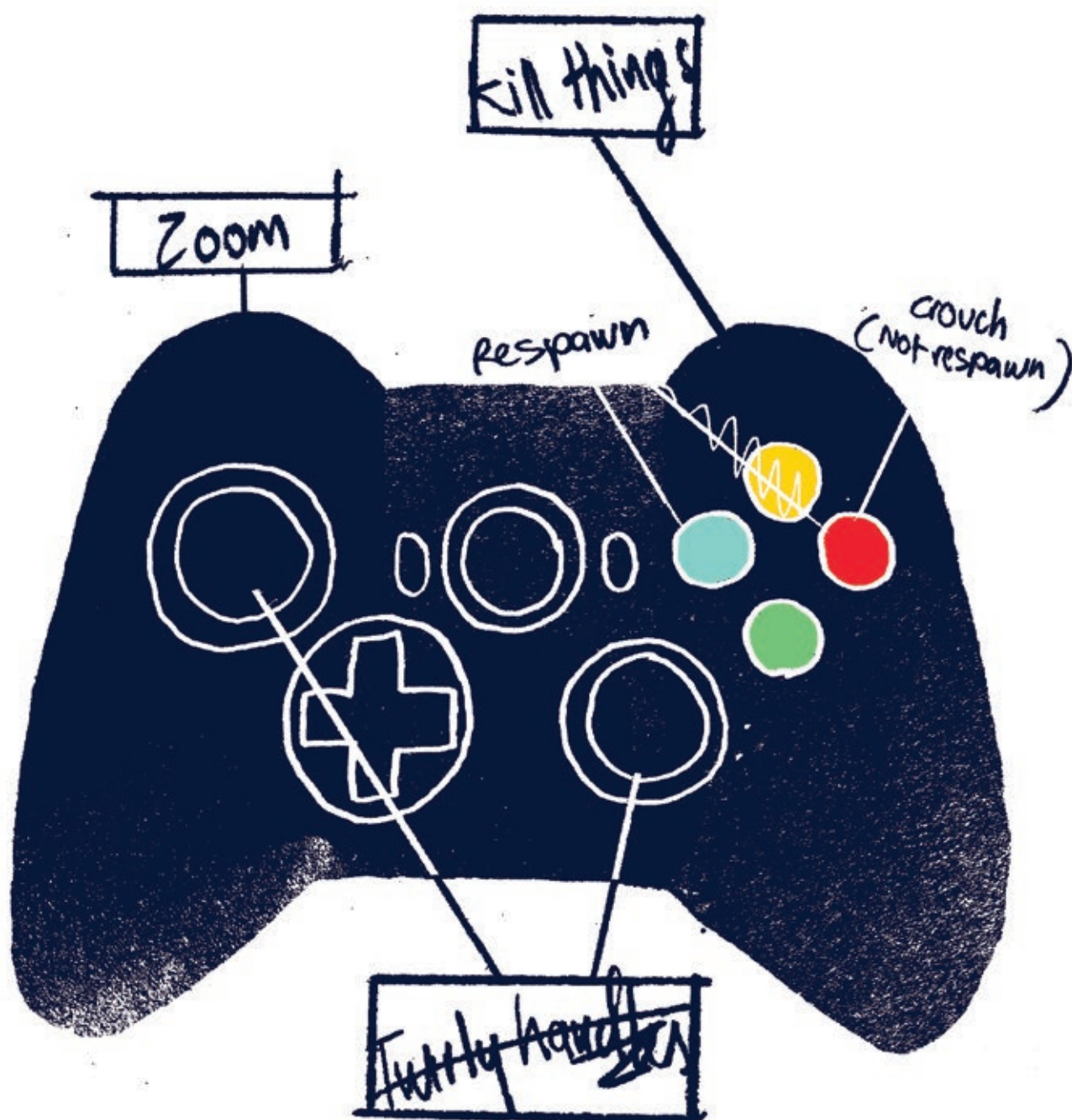
the enemy cancer cells. Not only is the game an enjoyable distraction, it also helps these children to gain a sense of control over their condition.

Of course, opinions are mixed as to whether it is possible to "think yourself better," but it certainly doesn't do any harm to try. The greatest role such games play, however, is in making the pain of cancer manageable, not just for children but for all sufferers of the disease. In a study conducted by Wheeling Jesuit University, participants were asked to submerge one hand in ice water. One group played video games whilst doing so; the other half did not. Interestingly, the former group lasted markedly longer. The study suggests that games "are more than a distraction – that the patient experiences physiological changes as a result of using the system. ... Games may have an analgesic influence and may impact how the brain responds to painful stimuli."

When researching this article, I was met with a wealth of scientific studies that refute any claim that video games are linked to violent tendencies in gamers. More surprising, however, was the number of studies indicating the positive potential of many games. Trust me – I have left a huge amount of great research out of this piece, including some that indicates that casual games may be as effective a cure for depression as medication.

As demonstrated by Mark David Chapman and the Oslo and Columbine massacres, entertainment can have adverse effects on a tiny portion of the population. However, such violent acts are nearly always the result of such individuals' mental states, and not a direct result of their engagement with entertainment media. As Drs Cheryl Olson and Lawrence Kutner put it, "for most kids and most parents, the bottom-line results of our research can be summed up in a single word: relax."

So relax! Video games are not going to corrupt your mind, nor the minds of your loved ones. If anything, video games have the potential to improve not only our brains and bodies, but our entire society. So go and pre-order *GTA V* – it's going to be badass.



Joysticks
NOTE: Good for moving

WHEN DUTY CALLS: A NOOB'S JOURNEY

BY JOSIE ADAMS

EVERY EPIC JOURNEY HAS A BEGINNING. EVERY GREAT CHAMPION WAS ONCE A NOOB. BUT HOW WOULD JOSIE ADAMS, *CRITIC*'S RESIDENT GAMING IGNORAMUS, FARE IN *CALL OF DUTY*'S BRUTAL DOMAIN, LET ALONE THE CUTTHROAT ENVIRONS OF *WORLD OF WARCRAFT*? WITH A KNOWLEDGEABLE GUIDE BY HER SIDE, *CRITIC* PITCHED JOSIE HEADFIRST INTO THE WORLD OF ONLINE GAMING, AND THEREBY RUINED HER WEEK.

BEFORE I PLAYED *CALL OF DUTY* (CoD) with people I actually knew, I went to the Gamerz Lounge with Baz, *Critic*'s Games Editor, who was to be my trainer. He played first, so I could see what all the controls do. For the uneducated, an Xbox controller has two twirly handles, or "joysticks," to use the technical term. One of them moves the screen around, and the other one moves your character. Both must be employed in order to move with maximum effectiveness. The front left button zooms in, and the right front button shoots. The blue button is "reload" (and also "respawn," which is what I had to use it as more frequently). The red button is crouch. I thought these two buttons were in each other's places, and kept accidentally crouching when I was trying to respawn; the lounge had to cope with me verbally abusing their property for "not letting me run." I now see that this was my bad. Everyone I spoke to assured me that learning the controls was the hardest part — once I had it down, "in a couple of weeks," I could start being good. Well, I had five days, and it was time to get acquainted with the next game.

After attempting CoD, *World of Warcraft* (WoW) was a welcome relief, not least because we got to sit at desk-mounted PCs rather than the limbless floor-chairs CoD required. I'd heard things about this game. Sad things; scary things; seductive things. A comforting hand was placed on my shoulder: "Are you ready?" My eyes darted floorward for a moment as I replied "no," and then I took a breath and clicked an ancient icon of nerdery, and the log-in screen unfurled.

Before letting me create an account, though, I had to watch a trailer for *The Mists of Pandaria*. This is the latest expansion of WoW, and is very obviously targeting a younger demographic. The trailer was basically *Kung Fu Panda 3* and was ridden with clichés (although having watched the rest of Blizzard's trailers, this could be an ongoing stylistic issue). I did not sign up to play bamboo-jousting with a Happy Meal toy. I wanted Runescape Plus.

Baz reassured me that I wouldn't have to play as a panda. There's no "what to expect when you're expecting" guide for creating a WoW account: whatever you spawn will be the embodiment

"THE FIRST ROUND I DIED A LOT, AND IT SUCKED. THE SECOND ROUND I DIED A LOT AGAIN, AND IT SUCKED."

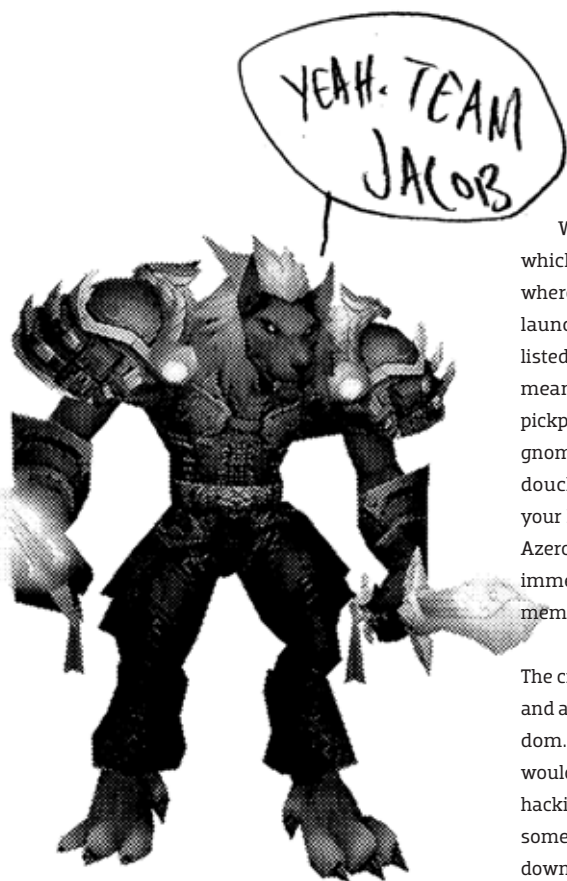
of some dark part of your soul, and it's for this reason that creating your character is one of the most intimidating parts of WoW (that, or it could have been Baz repeating the phrase "so poignant" quietly next to me). Choosing my gender was the hardest decision I've had to make: did I want to experience life as a male? Or did I want to be a strong, independent woman? What if I was bad at the game, and people thought it was

because I was a girl and not because I spent my childhood in the real world?

Baz told me that because I would likely not reach a voice-chatting level, I should make my "avatar" as much like myself as possible so that the experience would be personalised. This is why I chose to be a female and a Worgen, which is basically a werewolf: IRL I am surprisingly hairy, and have killed people with my teeth. Team Jacob! You can also choose which "class" your avatar is — Shaman, Hunter, and Death Knight are just some of the options. I chose to be a rogue, which Rob, a gaming connoisseur, would later tell me is a class dominated by "self-interested arseholes." Like they said, true to my real persona. I figured I'd use the same username I use for everything, Skuxslayer69. I was told, though, to "not be that person," and instead I am Braemblers.

Maybe I wasn't in the right frame of mind to appreciate gaming, thanks to several tortuous games of Monopoly, or maybe CoD is truly terrible. Taking a night off from The Board Game Without End, I enlisted a couple of guys for an evening of *Black Ops II*. I honestly do not know how they've managed to make so many different versions of CoD. Baz assures me the campaign narratives, when played out to the end, are emotionally stirring and fulfilling, but the vast majority of players only play "team deathmatches" and "free-for-alls," so I'm not sure why they bother re-releasing five hundred versions of *Twenty Arenas You Can Die In*.

I am incapable of doing most things for extended periods of time, and my attention span is even further limited when the thing I'm doing is as monotonous as CoD deathmatches are. The first round I died a lot, and it sucked. The second round I died a lot again, and it sucked. The third round I managed to kill a few people. By halfway through the fourth round, the glee I'd first felt at not being completely useless had worn off, and I



found myself going through the point-and-shoot motions with a glazed look on my face and a brewing case of cramps.

I kept playing for an hour in the hopes of rediscovering that peak I'd experienced around the twenty-fifth minute, but this game was doing more than sapping my will to live; this game nearly ruined my relationship. My boyfriend called me "quitter" and "annoying," and said I'd thrown the controller in a fit of rage, which was a blatant lie. When I called him out on this he became even more outraged, accusing me of breaking our pact to always back up each others' lies. I packed up my stuff and told him I was leaving because I needed "some time to myself." Time, that is, to secretly work on what I hoped was a lacking gamer skillset and not a freshly-cemented hatred of first-person shooters.

Before I tried CoD again, though, I needed a quick fix of a lil' somethin' else: I snuggled up in bed and installed WoW on my home computer. "Don't do it," Baz had told me, "it'll take up all your hard drive. You'll develop an addiction." He'd seen in my eyes that I'd be RPing as a Worgen for years

after my "research."

Different "classes" have different roles: Warriors and Death Knights are "tanks," which means they can take a lot of damage, whereas Priests and Shamans are healers and launch attacks from a distance. Rogues are listed only as "melee damage dealers," which means we do shit-all teamwork and a lot of pickpocketing. We are the Invisible Men. Rogue gnomes, Rob told me, are the ultimate in WoW douchebaggery. They sneak up and attack your knees; you never see them coming. What Azeroth didn't see coming was me, a noob who immediately became one of the most hated members of WoW: a kill-thief.

The city of Gilneas was under attack by Worgen and all within it were destined for a life of wolf-dom. I had a quest: to kill six of the beasts I would become. Yeah, WoW is dark as hell. I was hacking away at a Worgen when out of nowhere something flew over and smashed into it. It fell down dead, but my kill number did not go up. Some douchebag hunter and his pet dog ran over and looted the corpse that was rightfully mine.

I couldn't believe it. I demanded that Baz explain this outrage to me; "Arten" and his mutt had stolen my kill. It was then that I truly became The Rogue. I followed Arten, using my sneakiness to jump out at Worgens he'd nearly killed and strike the final blow. I snatched four more dying beasts from under his nose. It was satisfying and easy. As a reward for my kill numbers, I was given a wolf-fur cloak. I still possessed this when, ten minutes later, I became my wolf form, an experience I found to be a near-maximum level of creepy. I needed to quit for the day.

I set the PS3 up at my house and embarked solo on the campaign mode, which I figured would teach me things incrementally rather than placing me in the *Hunger Games*-esque situation that is popular CoD. As well as teaching me mad skillz, I expected that the campaign would have a storyline that would keep me from growing bored ... but it didn't. Because I'm bad, I had to replay the same scenes over and over. At least when you're playing deathmatches one

after the other, there's some variation in where and how you die.

The Black Ops II campaign is apparently set in the year 2025, even though for some reason the beginning suggests that you (David Mason) were an adult during African Jungle Communist Wars of the 1980s. Oh no, hang on – the answer is not that you're a perma-forty-year-old, it's that the

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first sequence of the campaign actually involves David's father, Alex. I had to Google that information, because the electro-shock torture scene the campaign starts with didn't make this information clear. It was emotionally stirring, though. Now, in 2025, Alex's old nemesis Menendez is orchestrating cyberterrorism! David must take up the reigns and defeat this foreigner, just like his dad before him. Understanding the background, however, did not alleviate the boredom that was a ten-second loop of Angolan yelling (I didn't make it to David's part of the game).

In campaign mode, the exact same people do the exact same things whenever you respawn, which in my case was about once every forty seconds. I'm sure that once you're good at shooting things, moving through the campaign is much less boring, and the online games would be better too: watching Baz play on Day One had been far more enjoyable than dying over and over and lying to myself that I was "doing really well."

I ASKED THE EXPERTS WHAT WAS SO APPEALING ABOUT A REPETITIVE FPS AURALLY DOMINATED BY SHRILL AUSTRALIAN TWELVE-YEAR-OLDS SCREAMING "ONE V ONE ME, C*NT!"

my player do any move yelled at me, albeit very slowly. I thought I'd have been at least average within a few days, but Baz's warning that it can take two weeks to fully master the controls was true. There was no way I was going to go through a fortnight of extreme anger, disappointment, and boredom just for the glory of being able to fully appreciate some graphic headshots.

Those who have mastered the motions of CoD really enjoy it; there are millions of them. Realising there was no way I could reach their level by the next day, I asked the experts what was so appealing about a repetitive FPS aurally dominated by shrill Australian twelve-year-olds screaming "one v one me, c*nt!" "It's hard to give you an answer for that," acknowledged Rob, "there are better alternatives for the genre."

Part of the appeal, I proposed, could come from finally mastering the gameplay: "getting good" was a stage everyone I spoke to brought up, possibly because I was desperately asking how much more pain I'd have to go through. I accosted one player to find out how she got good: "it took me about six hours of straight playing to get average," said *Critic* intern Josie C, before she was forced to return her focus to a game of Monopoly. Another CoD fan, Shariya, admitted that as someone who had only been

a very casual gamer before being introduced to FPSs, it had taken nearly a month to become a decent player.

This information wasn't a surprise to me after my experience, but would probably shock online reviewers who lauded the game as being "noob-friendly" with a "shallow learning curve." I readily admitted that it might have been a shallow learning curve for someone with previous gaming experience, but for a total noob it was deeper than *Eat Pray Love*.

What about WoW? Was that considered noob-friendly? Strangely, no. Blizzard released *World of Warcraft*, possibly the world's most famous massively multiplayer online role-playing game (MMORPG), in 2004. WoW costs about US\$14 per month to play, but there's a free "starters" edition that you can play for an unlimited amount of time – you just can't get above level 20. This year, there are about seven million monthly subscribers. That means they pay. Every month. These people are all above level 20, and I had dropped myself into their world.

I'd been warned about WoW culture because of its age: many players were left over from the early, "vanilla" WoW, or at least the early expansions, and could be elitist or rude to new players. Baz assured me, though, that in the early stages of the game I wasn't likely to have a level 85 Orc Death Knight jump out from a tree and shank

my avatar's ass. Like keep to like, and some even welcome newbies for a reason not listed on Blizzard's website: WoW is losing players. They needed me, and they might need you.

WoW, everyone had told me, was far more social than CoD. I definitely saw the truth in this, as my CoD player interactions were limited to the diseased coughing of adolescents and swear words. For a starter, though, WoW isn't very social. I was unable to "whisper" or type messages, but could applaud and dance. I was hesitant to use either of these moves in front of other players because I only ever wanted to interact in order to hurl insults at them; possibly a side effect of my time playing CoD.

I could see the appeal in both of these games, but only for someone who already had skill. I could go through another month of raging against the machine to find out how great the games were, or I could just ask. "Well," sighed my buddy the tank, when asked if CoD and WoW were all they were cracked up to be (from the perspective of someone with actual talent), "they're no *Minecraft*."



MONOPOLY: THE POOR MAN'S ARSENIC

BY TRISTAN KEILLOR

It's right up there with Chess and Snakes & Ladders in the canon of iconic board games. So why does Monopoly suck so hard? Tristan Keillor delves into the game's shady past to uncover exactly why Monopoly is evil and wants you to suffer.

NERDS LIKE VIDEO GAMES, everybody likes drinking games, and nobody likes board games. I wish that sentence had come naturally, but it's taken a week of Facebook rejections, face-to-face rejections and people "losing their phone" to teach me that no matter how much beer is on offer, it's not worth playing board games for.

Oddly, whenever someone did reply to an invitation, they'd say "it's called a 'board game' because it makes us bored." I'll never understand how someone can find that dribble of a pun entertaining and yet not be entertained by games that are specifically *designed* to entertain. Monopoly's moored in the mainstream, so I figured it must be been doing something right in order to avoid sinking. As it turns out, this is a game that only exists because of its creators' penchant for crime, conspiracy and general cuntiness.

To start my research I managed to rope my girlfriend, cousin and colleague into a Monopoly match. They were all my close friends and the only people to RSVP, but it seemed that after picking pieces they each developed new personalities. The first few moments of the game were fantastic: people were handing out colourful

money, whatever I landed on I got to buy, and the whole time I could pretend I was a shoe. Eventually, this turned out to be the sole positive aspect of the game; everything else came down to chance and cheating.

"The first few moments of the game were fantastic: people were handing out colourful money, whatever I landed on I got to buy, and the whole time I could pretend I was a shoe."

Players have a variety of possible actions per turn – you can buy a property, pay rent or do as a community chest card dictates. All of these actions, however, are totally dictated by the dice. The only option you can choose at any point is whether to upgrade properties. Speedy upgrades make your property the biggest earner on the board – others often don't have the income to pay rent, and are thus forced into bitter bankruptcy. Upgrading can potentially be strategic – you have to balance building costs against what promises to yield the greatest income – but the advantages to upgrading are so obvious that players tend to do so as soon as they have enough money. Sadly, instead of blaming misfortune for their lack of funds, the players doing poorly blamed me. A terrible time ensued.

With no real options regarding play, the game quickly deteriorated from a tactical battle to scams and shouting. Money was sucked into paying the bank for land and houses, but not enough came out of the bank in return. People started to go bankrupt, with only the organiser to blame and the winner to bargain with. My girlfriend was the first to go, and she left with a sigh of relief. Oddly, she never suggested quitting; in a classic Prisoners' Dilemma, nobody said they were bored for fear of ruining the others' fun.

The game seemed a lot like Lotto: the one player above the poverty line was a shining example of wealth, and we all desperately waited for a chance card that would make us richer and them poorer. Just like with Lotto, though, our money disappeared far more often than it multiplied. The regular awarding of \$200 for passing GO also made the chance cards more and more meaningless. Turning the game around seemed less and less likely.

In the end, it came down to just me and my cousin, and there was only a \$300 difference in capital between us. The other players had given me their properties as they died, but this turned out to be a curse. We each upgraded all our properties to hotels in an attempt to bankrupt each other, but our assets were so evenly matched that the money simply circulated, with the constant \$200 for passing GO making rent seem like pennies.

I suggested a tie but my cousin refused; he'd taken it upon himself to punish me for ever suggesting Monopoly.

Eventually, I decided to cheat. Unlike in any other game, I couldn't just give up by being bad – there was nothing to be bad at. Luckily for me, my opponent had flaunted his wealth by stacking every bill into a pyramid, and by a stroke of luck this small pile was positioned by the fireplace. I wasn't particularly upset about never being able to use the Monopoly set again.

As it turns out, however, cheating is just as much a part of Monopoly as playing. It turns out that the game isn't popular just because it goes on forever and is exceptionally boring, but rather because the so-called "creator" of Monopoly himself cheated.

The least scandalous facet of Monopoly's history is the fact that it is based on (read: a total rip-off of) a board game called Landlords, created by Lizzie McGee. Basing games on other games is nothing new: Landlords is itself based on two millennia worth of roll-and-move games like Candy Land and Snakes & Ladders. What made Landlords different was that it was the first game based on the idea of buying properties with money while completing laps of a track.

Such additions are common in board games today, but when Landlords was invented in 1905 it was the first development of roll-and-move games since Egyptian times. The game had far more stylistic elements than Monopoly, too: the train stations acted like teleporters from place to place, free parking was actually a tax haven, and you only went around the board five times before your money was counted and a winner announced. In terms of innovation, teaching someone Landlords was like showing up in 1980 with a PS3. Its greatest feature, however, was the fact that it was not patented.

Landlords was passed from house to house on handmade boards with hastily remembered rules spread by word of mouth, and eventually ended up in the hands of angst-ridden Arts majors. We've all heard that Monopoly was

designed to promote Marxism as the medicine for capitalism's cancer, but that's only a half truth. As copies of the Landlords game were passed around, it evolved rapidly: half-forgotten rules mutated into new ones, unimportant rules were omitted and crappy rules were changed. Through a process similar to natural selection, the game gained a satirical Stalinesque spin and became the *Grand Theft Auto* of its time. It was eventually patented, but by this stage the passage of twenty years had seen the game progress dramatically into a simple stylistic variant of what was slowly becoming known as Monopoly.

"We've all heard that Monopoly was designed to promote Marxism as the medicine for capitalism's cancer, but that's only a half truth."

Parker Brothers promote a different story about Monopoly's origins – the story of Charles Darrow. Darrow was a typical "rags to riches" case: a victim of the Great Depression, he supposedly invented the game to feed his pregnant wife and child in 1932. Parker Brothers originally refused to buy the game, pinpointing 52 fatal flaws, but Darrow stuck by "his creation" until 1935, by which time he'd managed to sell over 5,000 copies of the game. Parker Brothers then changed their minds and bought him out, and just like a character in the game he was propelled into sudden prosperity. Darrow was now the creator of history's highest-earning board game, but just like one of its characters, he'd stolen to get there.

A month after they brought the patent, Parker Brothers sent a letter to Darrow explaining that they had just been informed of the true history of the game. Though they could have pulled the plug, Monopoly was their biggest earner and, being near bankruptcy, not a game they wanted to lose. Instead, they sent another letter to Darrow asking him to stick to his original story. They then drew a line through the past,

refusing to allow other companies to print the game without a Parker Brothers patent.

Parker Brothers also embarked on a mission to buy out any smaller companies' games that were in any way similar. First up was Lizzie McGee's copy of Landlords. As every subsequent finance-related game had sprung from Landlords, only McGee could claim a real patent. McGee, by this stage, was an elderly woman devoted to the idea that only land should be taxed. Parker Brothers offered to buy McGee out, but when they told her their plans to produce Monopoly instead of Landlords, she refused – she'd designed Landlords to educate people about taxation, and changing the rules would compromise that message.

This, however, proved to be no deterrent: McGee was an old lady, and it was not hard for Parker Brothers to trick her into believing that they would mass-produce Landlords alongside Monopoly. Buying the rights for only \$500, the Landlords game was given a tiny run and never mentioned again. From here, Parker Brothers tracked down any remaining copies, buying leftover boards for \$50 each.

These seem like wild allegations, and like all wild allegations, they have a fantastic backstory. In this case, it is the story of Anti-Monopoly. Anti-Monopoly was the brainchild of Ralph Anspach, an economics professor and ex-Israeli militant whose greatest claim to fame is having authored *The Billion Dollar Monopoly Swindle*, a book detailing a six-year court case against Parker Brothers and the detective work that went into it. Anti-Monopoly is an asymmetrical game in which one player attempts to lose all of their money while the other tries to gain it. The game is shit, but Parker Brothers still went after it. Anspach was told to stop producing his game, and 40,000 copies were destroyed. Unfortunately for Parker Brothers, Anspach wasn't prepared to back down. Researching everyone who had played the game before the patent was introduced in 1932, he eventually found a number of intact copies owned by McGee's contemporaries, as well as a number of people who could testify to having been bribed by the company.

The case ended up in the Supreme Court, with more scandals being uncovered in the process. For instance, Milton Bradley, the producers of Candy Land and Twister, knew all about Monopoly's secret and had been producing a similar game – Easy Money – for years. The evidence against Parker Brothers was startling, with much of it immortalised on the board itself. In standard American versions of the game, for instance, the streets are based on Atlantic City, the original home of the Quaker people from whom Darrow stole the idea. Unfortunately for Darrow, the Quakers had misspelled Atlantic City's Marvin Gardens as Marven Gardens – a mistake he copied exactly.

"Anti-Monopoly is an asymmetrical game in which one player attempts to lose all of their money while the other tries to gain it. The game is shit, but Parker Brothers still went after it."

What's more, it soon came out that every game Parker Brothers had attributed to Darrow actually had nothing to do with him, but were simply desperate attempts to capitalise on Monopoly's success. However, none of this can be seen as the worst thing that Parker Brothers did to Monopoly. That award must go to their destruction of the original, short game that was plagued by none of the faults that started this feature.

One of the many board games that Parker Brothers bought and crushed was Finance – an auction-style game that was actually good! The auction rule is another artifact of Monopoly's history that has gotten rather lost along the way. Official Monopoly actually includes a seldom-remembered rule detailing that if a player lands on a property but elects not to buy it, then it is put up for auction. In practice, this never happens – people rarely pass on the opportunity to buy anything. The Quakers that Darrow stumbled across had added the rule allowing players to buy property because their kids were crap at bidding and didn't like loud noises. Darrow, in other words, patented the children's version of the game.

Finance was popular because whose turn it was didn't matter. Turns only determined what property would go up for auction and who would pay rent next. Instead of only playing the game when it was your roll, you were playing all the time. What's more, you weren't just doing what a die told you; you were choosing when and what to bid. As such, the game was actually enjoyable. On top of all of this, Finance never lasted long – people inevitably over-bid for properties and quickly went bankrupt. By patenting the children's version of Monopoly, Parker Brothers essentially ensured that the game would be a never-ending torture session for anyone over the age of 12.

Once I knew why Monopoly was crap, it was easy to get the gang back together for another game. Parker Brothers could monopolise the Monopoly industry, but they were powerless in our homes. We were going to play the outlawed and suppressed versions.

We started with Landlords, but because it was designed to educate players about land taxation we quickly agreed that it sucked. Players still had minimal control over their actions, and with only five trips around the board it was clear that nobody would earn much from properties. Consequently, we tweaked the game slightly by halving our money, meaning that these tiny profits became comparatively huge. On top

of this we added 20- and 10-sided dice, allowing players to choose whether to opt for the D20's higher numbers or the D10's greater certainty. Suddenly the game got highly strategic: what die to use became the central question, with everyone weighing up the benefits of getting to Mayfair ASAP against the risk of wasting their five trips around the board.

The second game we played was Finance, the auction game that Monopoly suppressed. Here we started with only \$1,000 and the ability to bid on any property. The bidding was amazing: forcing someone who wanted a property to

pay top dollar in an attempt to bankrupt them always entailed the risk of being stuck with the property yourself.

As much as I wanted this game to be exciting, the fact that it was designed during the Great Depression (when people had a lot more time and got a thrill just from looking at money) was obvious. People were going bankrupt on the fourth or fifth rounds, but the bidding was so time-consuming that first two rounds dragged out into hour-long ordeals. While the game was shorter than regular Monopoly, it was still far longer than anything I was prepared to play. We managed to fix this by introducing silent bidding, which made the game both faster and more strategic. By the end there was once again a clear winner, but instead of throwing their money in the fire I simply bid all of my money on Old Kent Road.

It soon became clear that these games were far more fun than standard Monopoly. Before Parker Brothers patented the game, the rules were fluid and open to adjustment; today, we are stuck with the kiddies' version. Regular Monopoly has made us all hate board games, but perhaps our ability to alter it affords it some potential. Breaking the rules not only adds to the excitement of

"We can adjust Monopoly to be whatever we want it to be, whether that's a roll-and-move game, an auction game, or even a drinking game. This makes it far more malleable than a video game."

the game, but also allows us to adapt it to fit any number of situations. We can adjust Monopoly to be whatever we want it to be, whether that's a roll-and-

move game, an auction game, or even a drinking game. This makes it far more malleable than a video game. What board games lack in faces to shoot they gain in flexibility – you can create a game without having to code and test it out instantly. Sure, Monopoly may suck, but there's much more to the game than just the rules.



4+

The Mysterious World of Bronies

BY THOMAS RAETHEL

In recent years, a bizarre new subculture has sprung up, based on fandom of the television series *My Little Pony: Friendship Is Magic*. Its predominantly male, adult membership call themselves bronies. But what do we really know about this group? Thomas Raethel investigated the subculture, and found a largely secretive group intent on writing its own story.

IT WAS 1982. THE FALKLANDS WAR WAS beginning, and Michael Jackson's *Thriller* was at the top of the charts. American illustrator Bonnie Zacherle began to produce *My Little Pony*, a range of rubber dolls marketed towards pre-pubescent girls throughout the United States. Little could Zacherle have known that 31 years later, her trademark would spawn a conference in Baltimore that would attract roughly 8,000 attendees – primarily fully-grown men.

2013's "BronyCon" was the third such annual conference, and is unlikely to be the last. The men and women who attended it identify themselves as "bronies" (a portmanteau of bro and pony), and have come to epitomise the flurry of subcultures that have emerged in recent years thanks to the dynamism of internet forums.

The precise origins of *My Little Pony* fandom remain hazy. It has, however, been noted that increased interest in the brand coincided with Hasbro's 2010 television revamp *My Little Pony: Friendship Is Magic*. Like many other subcultures considered perverse by much of the general public, bronydom has its roots in the infamous website 4chan.org. Initial conversations on 4chan in October 2010 largely involved animation enthusiasts watching the

show ironically and sharing their thoughts in an objective manner. But objectivity soon gave way to subjectivity as the same critics began to adopt monikers used in the show. Nobody became "npony," anybody became "anypony," and everybody became "everypony."

Bronies were quickly marginalised by other users of 4chan, and were effectively expelled from the community through word-filters and moderators. Independent websites were established for these migratory proto-bronies, facilitating a rapid expansion in numbers. Between May and August 2011, searches for "bronies" on Google exploded. Bronydom transformed from a fringe group on the oft-called "arsehole of the internet" to a fully-fledged subculture virtually overnight.

Bronies share their origins with a number of undesirable siblings. A prime example is the "furry fandom." In what can only be described as gentrified bestiality, "furries" participate in sex acts while garbed in full length plush outfits designed to imitate various members of the animal kingdom. Many early bronies were converts of fringe movements such as furry fandom: they channelled cosplay and *My Little Pony* into sexual fetishes, which may help to explain the development of practices such as "clipping."

Clipping is a phenomenon seldom reported by the media. It appears to be quietly suppressed by the far more vocal clique of bronies who claim to not participate in such activities. In simple terms, clipping involves masturbating to unofficial, sexualised images of the show's characters. According to an internal study undertaken by bronies themselves, 19.05 per cent of respondents engaged in clipping. Considering that a significant percentage of bronies are closeted, and taking into account the stigma attached to such practices, it is fair to assume that the real "clopper" population is likely far larger.

Most bronies, when asked, will identify with one of the main characters from the show on a deeply personal level. The main characters include Twilight Sparkle, Rainbow Dash, Rarity, Fluttershy, Pinkie Pie and Applejack, all of whose names suggest the mental age of the intended audience (with the possible exception of Applejack, who shares her name with a potent alcoholic beverage).

An interesting development in the *My Little Pony* canon was the June 2013 release of a feature length film, *Equestria Girls*, in which the ponies introduced in the television series are transported to a different world, manifesting as (female) teenage humans. This rather extreme

anthropomorphism echoes what has become a widespread practice in brony forums: humanising the *My Little Pony* characters. As such, some media outlets, including *Slate* magazine, have accused the film's creators of pandering to a brony desire for sexualised *My Little Pony* media.

According to statistics on Google, a rapid internationalisation of interest in bronydom is apparent. In an unpredictable twist, searches relating to bronies are rapidly gaining traction in Indonesia, a country that is 87.2 per cent Muslim. It appears, therefore, that bronydom may transcend religion (although a 2012 study revealed that 59.81 per cent of brony respondents in the United States consider themselves either atheist or agnostic).

New Zealand has not escaped the brony phenomenon. No research has been done into the subculture's development here, but an indication of its following can be gathered from the largest New Zealand brony Facebook group, NeighZealand. With 479 fans, the group is the largest of a considerable cluster of similar pages, which total roughly 1,000 members. Many more closeted brony New Zealanders probably exist, and it is possible that a sizeable minority choose to not use Facebook.

A critical appointment in the show's development was that of developer Lauren Faust, who had previously worked on the Cartoon Network's *The Powerpuff Girls* and *Foster's Home for Imaginary Friends* and had played an integral role 1990s "Disney Renaissance," responsible for films such as *Hercules* and *The Little Mermaid*. In each of these offerings, adult themes and

"The garish colours of My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic are largely the result of the show's digital origins in Adobe Flash. This could help explain the show's appeal: adults on internet forums who have existing relationships with amateur, Flash-animated productions are more likely to be bronies than those who don't."

humour were subtly paired with animation to make the content easily accessible to children. However, unlike in the case of *My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic*, the majority of adult viewers were parents watching the films with their children. The average modern brony, it should be noted, is a single, heterosexual Caucasian man in his early twenties.

In internal studies, bronies often cite the show's artistic direction as the factor that draws them into bronydom. This differentiates *My Little Pony* from the older animations that attracted adult viewers. Whereas the older Disney films (and even the original 1980s series of *My Little Pony*) were nuanced and subtle, the garish colours of *My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic* are largely the result of the show's digital origins in Adobe Flash. This could help explain the show's appeal: adults on internet forums who have existing relationships with amateur, Flash-animated productions are more likely to be bronies than those who don't.

A surprising but inevitable development of the brony culture is the ever-increasing number of "pegasisters" (yet another portmanteau, this time of Pegasus and sister). Totalling 11 per cent of the brony population, these female fans remain a small minority. One explanation for this may be that female fans do not experience the feeling of social irreverence in which many male fans take pride; male bronies often derive a sense of satisfaction from their subversion of deeply rooted gender norms.

Timeline:



1982:

Bonnie Zacharle conceives the *My Little Pony* brand as a line of rubber toys resembling anthropomorphic ponies.

SEPT 1986:

The first television adaption of *My Little Pony* is released, and runs for two seasons until its cancellation a year later in September 1987.

LATE 2003:

4chan, the reluctant breeding ground for bronies, is founded.



10 OCTOBER 2010:

My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic premieres, and proves to be an immediate success with its intended audience of female children.

"Celebrities accused on brony forums of closeted bronydom include wrestler John Cena, celebrity chef Anthony Bourdain, musician Weird Al Yankovich, and even President Bill Clinton."

Celebrities accused on brony forums of closeted bronydom include wrestler John Cena, celebrity chef Anthony Bourdain, musician Weird Al Yankovich, and even President Bill Clinton. Whilst it is more likely that none of these men are participants in the brony subculture, less prominent celebrities have been seen donning Pony regalia openly in public, including music producer deadmau5.

Bronies have justified their fixation by highlighting several key aspects of *My Little Pony*. The oft-quoted slogan "Love and Tolerance" is one of many attempts to attach greater meaning to what is essentially still a children's television show. Unfortunately for bronies, the word "tolerance" has never once been uttered by any of the characters. The slogan appears to be the creation of adult fans who wish to impose their social disenfranchisement onto the ethos of *My Little Pony*.

In an age where any group of people from virtually any corner of the globe can converge in a digital medium, increasingly unlikely subcultures are beginning to emerge. Bronies are one of many, but stand out in both number and perplexity. It remains to be seen how long the culture's popularity will last. Bronydom will likely be seen in the future as an extreme example of the power of internet forums to facilitate nascent subcultures.

Endnote

It should be noted that in the process of writing this article, I found it difficult to locate studies relating to *My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic* fandom that weren't conducted by bronies themselves. While it is reasonable that bronies show interest in the demography and characteristics of their own subculture, accepting many claims made by brony researchers requires a certain suspension of disbelief. For example, herdcensus.com has deduced that 4.0 to 6.8 per cent of the Internet-using US population "strongly identify" as bronies. This amounts to a population of between seven and 12.4 million. While the brony subculture has grown rapidly in the three years since its inception, an American followership two to three times that of New Zealand's entire populace is clearly exaggerated, undermining the credibility of websites like HerdCensus.

A documentary titled *Bronies: The Extremely Unexpected Adult Fans of My Little Pony* premiered on 4 November 2012 in Anaheim, California. I watched the film hoping to gather some unbiased information, but from the outset it was clear that the film is poorly shrouded propaganda. Criticism of the sexualisation of the show is quickly written off as right-wing sensationalism supported by media outlets such

as Fox News. That aspect is thus largely ignored, and the majority of the documentary focuses on socially inept individuals who perceive their bronydom to be a vital social lubricant. The film explores the international popularity of bronydom, interviewing bronies from locations as diverse as Manchester and Tel Aviv.

One of the principal researchers of bronydom is Dr. Patrick Edwards. His website bronystudy.com, formed with Dr Marsha H. Redden, serves as one of the more prominent outlets of brony academia. Studies relating to both bronies and non-bronies have been explored by Edwards. It appears that few of his findings, however, have been peer-reviewed by other psychologists. Vitally, Edwards' son is a brony, and on the website's Frequently Asked Questions page Redden admits that Edwards is "involved in other aspects of the fandom."

Whether due to a widespread ambivalence towards *My Little Pony* fans or an intellectual whitewash by determined bronies, conflicts of interest have led to an ill-researched and yet rapidly growing subculture.

19 OCTOBER 2010:

Amid Amidi pens "The End of the Creator-Driven Era in TV Animation," an article on cartoonbrew.com. It promptly spikes the interests of animation buffs on 4chan's /co/ board. Interestingly, the article attracts negative attention regarding the creative side of *My Little Pony*. 4chan is soon inundated with posts regarding the show, and many proto-bronies are promptly banned.

21 JUNE 2011:

The first BronyCon is held in midtown Manhattan, with around 100 attendees.



FEBRUARY 2012:

A /mlp/ board is established on 4chan to cater exclusively to *My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic* enthusiasts.

4 NOVEMBER 2012:

Bronies: The Extremely Unexpected Adult Fans of My Little Pony is premiered at the Anaheim Convention Centre in California.

16 JUNE 2013:

My Little Pony: Equestria Girls is released in theatres across the United States. Attendance well exceeds expectations, and compensatory screenings take place to cope with demand.

2 AUGUST 2013:

BronyCon 2013 is held in Baltimore – the first conference to be held outside of New York City – and attracts roughly 8,400 attendees, sparking an unprecedented degree of media coverage.



Love is Blind

CRITIC'S INFAMOUS BLIND DATE COLUMN BRINGS YOU WEEKLY SHUTDOWNS, HILARIOUSLY mismatched pairs, and the occasional hookup. Each week, we lure two singletons and ply them with alcohol and food (in that order), then wait for their reports to arrive in our inbox. If this sounds like you, email news@critic.co.nz or FB message us. But be warned – if you dine on the free food and dash without sending us a write-up, a Critic writer will write one under your name. And that won't end well for you.

Finn

MY FLATMATES DOBBED ME IN FOR THE DATE BUT I WAS READY TO MAKE the most of it after some sneaky warm-up shots at home.

The best way to describe my date is "hot nerd." She seemed shy at first, blushing behind her curly blondish (?) hair and what I presumed were hipster-ironic-but-worn-totally-seriously oversized glasses. Her body was wicked, though, and she lit up quite quickly – turns out she was a really good lass to hang out with.

She was really interested in my rugby team (I had been at training just before coming to the date) and we talked heaps about how long it would take for Otago to lose the Ranfurly Shield again, which was totally unexpected chat. The alcohol seemed to work pretty efficiently on her, so I snuck some of her bottle into my glass when she went to the bathroom (probably to text her friends or some shit like that).

We decided to go and get a drink after dinner, and in a surprising – but certainly not unpleasant turn – she became really affectionate and cuddly. I had consigned myself early on to the fact that this girl, while fun, probably wouldn't be the root I was hoping for, but her friendliness quickly caused me to reevaluate the situation.

I must have seemed like such a douche, but I actually asked her back to mine for coffee. I had seen it in some really alty movies and thought she would appreciate the quote, but I regretted it the moment I heard it come out. She just laughed and agreed.

I tried to slowly flirt her into bed but she was two steps ahead of me and immediately asked where my room was.

Alas, brewers' droop attacked in one fell swoop. Thankfully, she quickly appraised the situation and my fears were alleviated as she resuscitated me with her mouth. We've all heard stories about nerds' unexpected sexual prowess, and she didn't disappoint. We went at it for ages ... and then again in the morning.

Rachel

THROUGHOUT MY TIME AT OTAGO I'VE BEEN TOLD I'M SOMEWHAT OF A hermit, which is probably why I've often struggled with boyfriends.

So, as I neared the end of my final year here, I decided to throw my hat in the ring for Critic's blind date. I hadn't read the magazine much but I knew the dates were popular and sometimes ended up with very interesting nights being had.

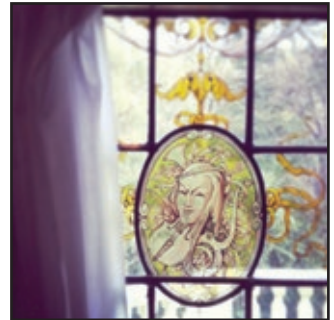
I was hoping for a sweetheart but couldn't help smiling at the Scarfie boy that fate presented me with. He was muscular, poorly dressed and kept talking about what "the lads" had been up to, but he was nice overall and we managed to find a mutual interest: our respective summer driving tours up and down the country.

The food was really good, and after getting through a good portion of my wine bottle I was feeling quite tipsy. I was having a lot of fun – my date was laughing and keeping up with conversation – and so, nearing the end of the meal, I gave him the rest of my wine – I could see he would probably handle it better than me.

Not quite ready to part after dinner we went out for a nightcap, and although a woman never tells, I must confess that he got my lubrication going. We cuddled up together at the bar for a while and I felt almost too enthusiastic when he asked whether we should go back to one of our own places for another drink.

Now, let's just say that there was only one thing I ended up drinking after that, and I didn't exactly wake up to my usual alarm. Sure, he wasn't exactly the type of guy I would normally go for, but as Zooey Deschanel said in *500 Days of Summer*, "it was goooood."

You only live once and I've ticked off the Scarfie box now. My years here were good!



Olveston

BY PHOEBE HARROP

DESPITE HAVING THE SLIGHTLY CRINGE SLOGAN "Visit yesterday today!" Olveston – a historic home perched halfway up the hill overlooking Dunedin – is quite the local gem, and definitely worth venturing out of the ghetto to see. With over 30,000 visitors a year (coincidentally, this is around the same number of Americans who illegally visit Cuba annually), Olveston attracts locals and retiree cruise ship passengers alike.

Built between 1905 and 1906 by the Theomins, a filthy rich Dunedin family originally of German Jewish origin, Olveston was, in its heyday, a real life Downton Abbey. A butler, chauffeur, gardener and multiple live-in maids serviced the Theomins' every need. Like characters from a game of Antipodean Cluedo, they bustled around rooms such as the Library, the Card Room, the Billiard Room, the Great Hall, the Vestibule, the Scullery and the Butler's Pantry. While the plebs in surrounding Dunedin remained without electric lighting, Olveston was built with its own electricity generator and even has central heating, as well as a snazzy servant calling system with buttons throughout the house.

The head of the household, David Theomin, made his fortune supplying Dunedin's gold-rush

nouveau riche with exotic nick-knacks and cutting edge devices from all over the world. His extensive travels – to China, Japan, the United States and Europe – and eye for souvenirs have left Olveston studded with a veritable trove of treasures. An impressive set of Samurai swords in the entrance way? Check. A Steinway grand piano in the sitting room? Check. Original paintings by Charles Goldie and Francis Hodgkins, a 17th-century Spanish tapestry, and a full-sized billiards table? Sure, why not. Oh, and Mr Theomin had an obvious penchant for timepieces – there's a rather impressive St. Ives grandfather clock which just chills on the beautiful wooden staircase (itself shipped in parts from England and assembled on-site, fitting together like a puzzle without glue or nails) and features a sailing ship-shaped second hand that has been ticking backwards and forwards for 300 years.

When Dorothy Theomin, a strapping, mountain-scaling lass who never married (although she did keep a "secretary companion" in quarters onsite ... hmmm) died in 1966, she left the home and its vast array of rare and valuable fixings to the city of Dunedin. The house has been beautifully maintained and has barely changed since 1933, the year in which David

Theomin died, leaving his daughter the property. The coolest thing about the place is the fourth floor annexe (once the servants' quarters), which is rented out as a flat to post-grad students (of good character, naturally) who keep an eye on the place in exchange for free rent.

Think of it as a nearby Larnach Castle, sans supposed ghosts but with a friendlier admission price (\$14.50 for students, which includes a guided tour). Enjoy.

Get there: on foot. Olveston is on Royal Terrace – huff and puff your way up Pitt Street from the Knox Church corner to get there.

Do: check out the beautifully restored 1921 Fiat 510 Tourer in the garage. David Theomin gifted it to his chauffeur on his deathbed but it subsequently disappeared, only being discovered in 1994 in a Central Otago shed.

Don't: miss the splendid publication *Eating Without Fears* on the kitchen bench – "One would think it almost unnecessary to give a recipe for making tea. And yet one gets such remarkably bad tea as a rule, that I am going to give instructions regardless of criticism."

Eat: up the hill at Spelt Bakery on Highgate. They have cronuts!

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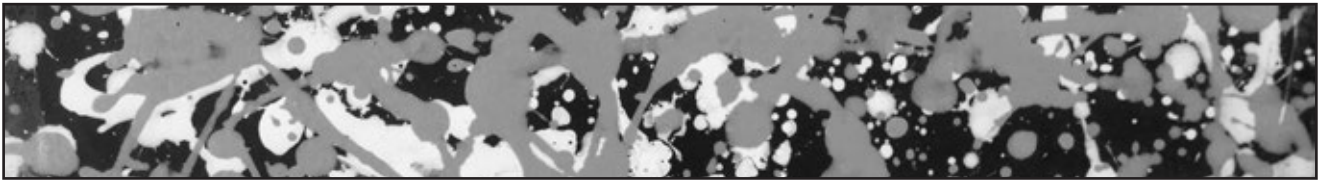
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Hate Modern Art If You Want To

IN RECENT YEARS, THE CONCEPT OF "ART" HAS been expanded to the point where many feel as though they can no longer question a work's artistic quality. Doing so implies that they are unable to discern the meaningful message hidden behind what appears to be a pile of rubbish in the middle of the gallery floor.

The question, however, isn't so much whether a work counts as "art" but whether we have to agree that it is objectively "brilliant" or "beautiful." Perhaps it's time that the art world actually heed its own philosophy and accept that beauty truly is in the eye of the beholder. In other words, not everybody has to like it.

A seeming lack of skill seems to be the tipping point for many modern art sceptics. A black square being hailed as a masterpiece seems to defy common sense, as does a shark in a box being worth two million dollars. At some point in your life you've probably flicked paint on some sort of canvas – the chosen method of the iconic Jackson Pollock. Modern art appears to be something you could have done, but didn't; yet we seem to be expected to find it amazing regardless. In other words, an "us" and "them" mentality is fostered by the modern art community, in which the opinions of outsiders are dismissed as being the result of a lack of understanding.

The Modernist art movement took off during the twentieth century, and encouraged artists to experiment with, and challenge, traditional forms and perceptions of art. Considered to be the most influential artwork of the time, Marcel Duchamp's "Fountain" – essentially a urinal on a pedestal, signed "R. Mutt" – was a

(rejected) submission to the prestigious Society of Independent Artists in 1917. So what makes Duchamp's effort so influential? The answer is likely that it directly questions what it is that makes something "art." Conceptual art has since taken off, and artists increasingly test how far they can stretch people's perceptions and understanding of what the medium entails.

There are countless stories of famous artworks being mistaken for junk. A Damien Hirst (the guy responsible for the two million dollar shark) once ended up in a charity shop. Last year, waste disposal experts threw out an Anish Kapoor. Clearly, these works do not scream "art" to all audiences.

This raises an interesting question. If somebody looks at a piece of art and sees something not worth keeping, should we seek to "enlighten" them and sympathetically dismiss it as a misunderstanding? Or should we perhaps question our own opinion? Sure, it's "art," but perhaps the standard is rubbish.

The basic philosophy underpinning much of the Modernist movement is that everything has some inherent beauty – you just have to look at it the right way in order to find it. Art, therefore, cannot be held to any objective standard. As a result, the question "what is art?" becomes unanswerable.

However, it is at this point that the "art world" tends to slide towards hypocrisy. Highly influential French theorist Roland Barthes pointed out that the meaning of a text is determined as much by the reader as it is by the writer. This applies equally to an artwork. A viewer's level of artistic exposure and their personal preferences

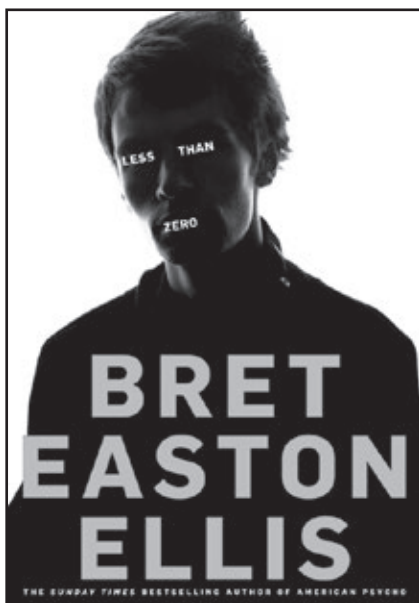
contribute just as much as – if not more than – the art itself to the viewer's overall enjoyment.

Colin McCahon is an artist that I have consistently defended on the basis that his brilliance can only be truly appreciated by those with a contextual awareness of his background. A few days ago, however, I visited a dealer gallery in Wellington and found a McCahon sitting alone on a wall with a \$65,000 price tag attached. I didn't even recognise it as a McCahon at first – it was an unimpressive piece of tattered canvas sporting some black lines and a few words. \$65,000 seemed ridiculous.

As I explained to the gallery attendant why I particularly liked another work in the room, however, he responded by saying that, "oh, my favourite is definitely the McCahon." I left wondering why. For the first time, I found myself not simply taking such a statement for granted. How, I wondered, does a simple name make an artwork unquestionably "brilliant"? No artist is consistent, and yet today it seems that a name alone can trump any question of quality. Part of me continues to believe that there are no objective standards when it comes to art; another thinks that the time and effort put in to producing a piece is deserving of some emphasis.

Don't hate on me for finding a square of red mind-blowing, because I certainly don't hate on you for not. I might even sympathise, and agree how patronising it is that the "us" and "them" mentality assumes that some people simply "don't understand." Urban Dictionary defines an "art fag" as a "pretentious individual," and I'm starting to whole-heartedly agree.





Less Than Zero

by Bret Easton Ellis

BY MILLIE LOVELOCK

"Upon finishing this book I was left with the absolute certainty that my insides had been irrevocably rearranged. It is perfectly constructed and its melancholic acceptance is beautifully relevant to any post-baby-boomer coming to the realisation that there may be endless opportunity in youth but no definable or desirable future left to obtain."

LESS THAN ZERO IS THE FIRST NOVEL BY LITERARY brat-pack misanthrope Bret Easton Ellis. The novel details narrator Clay's return to Los Angeles for Christmas after his first semester away at college. Clay is from a wealthy family, and all of his friends are rich, bored, and saturated with pop and celebrity culture.

While back home Clay avoids confronting his girlfriend Blair about their relationship, indulges in illicit drugs, crawls from luxurious suburban party to downtown club, and enjoys a myriad of sexual relations. It is apparent from the outset that Clay feels as though he is on a different wavelength from those around him; he seems unable or unwilling to engage himself emotionally. Clay is a passive and nihilistic, an accepting observer following a "why not" mantra.

In writing *Less Than Zero*, Easton Ellis used Joan Didion's *Play It As It Lays* as a template, taking her mélange of disparate nihilism, 1960s excess, and clean-cut minimalism, and exporting it into a 1980s diaspora. The novel starts out a little

clumsily, seemingly while Easton Ellis finds his stylistic feet, but quickly draws the reader in. I found Clay's stark narration incredibly engaging, and felt that as a reader I put aside my own ethical and moral standards in order to take part in some serious voyeurism.

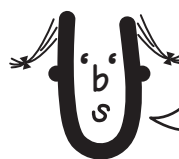
It was hard to set down the book the first time I read it, and was hardly any easier the second time around. For the wealthy young characters the sky is the limit, and it is almost impossible not to follow their exploits with a degree of fascination. However, that is not to say that there are no moments in the book that have a real emotional impact. The blunt force of the narration and the utter inability of Clay and the others to demonstrate any more than a fleeting interest in anything outside of themselves was frankly traumatic.

For me, the most upsetting parts of the book were those involving Clay's childhood friend Julian. Julian seems to have completely lost control of his life; he is in desperate trouble but is unable

to get help from anyone he knows. While Julian's story is viscerally painful for the reader, for Clay it is merely a form of distraction, a kind of stimulation that he cannot get from his own life or from his other friends. While Julian may only be a plot device used to emphasise the enormity of Clay's disconnect, I felt that he brought a sense of clarity to the morally bereft behaviour of Clay and the other characters; I desperately wanted for Clay to help Julian, and his seeming inability to do so was jarring.

Upon finishing this book I was left with the absolute certainty that my insides had been irrevocably rearranged. It is perfectly constructed and its melancholic acceptance is beautifully relevant to any post-baby-boomer coming to the realisation that there may be endless opportunity in youth but no definable or desirable future left to obtain.

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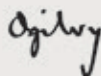
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The Way Way Back

4/5

Directors: Jim Rash and Nat Faxon

REVIEWED BY BAZ MACDONALD

WATCH THE FIRST FIVE MINUTES OF ANY coming-of-age film and you'll be able to guess exactly what happens in the next 85. *The Way Way Back* is no exception, and yet the film is so charmingly pleasant that not only do you not mind its predictability, you actually relish it.

The reasons for this are numerous, but most

important are its gorgeously written script and stellar cast. It seems to be a growing trend to jam pack movies with as many stars as possible, and this film is proof that it works. Stars known for their comedic ability, such as Steve Carell, Toni Collette, Sam Rockwell and Maya Rudolph offer not only their usual hilarious repartee but also some gut-wrenching dramatic performances. Carell in particular gives a performance that many people would not have believed him capable of.

The impressive acting was highlighted by the stunning script and superb direction from Jim Rash (who you may know as Dean Craig Pelton from *Community*) and Nat Faxon. This duo is riding high on the success of Oscar-winning *The Descendants*, and it shows. You can feel a

sort of confidence in the script that makes the film particularly engaging.

The Way Way Back deals with many of the themes and tropes that could be expected from this kind of movie, including the angst of being a teenager, feeling alone, and first love. However, it is rare to see these ideas handled with the level of skill and tact offered by *The Way Way Back*. Being able to sit through scenes that deal with such emotions without cringing enables you to appreciate them in a way few other films allow.

Movies like this make you realise why coming-of-age stories are important – growing up is a universal experience, and this movie reminds you of that. I didn't want it to end.

The Mortal Instruments: City of Bones

1/5

Director: Harald Zwart

REVIEWED BY ROSIE HOWELLS

THERE IS ALMOST NOTHING IN THIS FILM THAT we haven't seen before. Many times before. *The Mortal Instruments* is an unskilful amalgamation of the tropes and character types made familiar by *Harry Potter*, *Twilight*, *Lord of the Rings*, *True Blood*, *Pirates of the Caribbean* ... and the list goes on. Hell, they even copy *Star Wars*' most famous plot twist.

Sure, we can argue that this not the film's fault but the book's – the young-adult novel on which the film is based was first published in 2007, and there have been many fantasy films between then and now. But the screenwriter should have had the cultural awareness to make some changes, or at least to try and find something unique about these tired plot devices. She doesn't.

Apart from the done-to-death storyline and major plot holes (one of the main characters is bitten by a vampire and is never mentioned again), *The Mortal Instruments* is also plagued by the small stupidities of a money-grabbing Hollywood. For example, why do the female "Shadow Fighters" chose to battle demons in skin-tight leather pants and six-inch heels? How could four teenagers kill over 100 vampires in two minutes flat and yet fail to put a scratch on Jonathan Rhys Meyers?

And more importantly, why is Meyers wearing a clip-on braided rat's tail?

But fair play, there are some genuinely scary creatures and most of the actors do their best with the lines from Hades. Most of the actors, that is, not all of them. Jamie Campbell Bower clearly decided to use the film as a platform to show the world that he is "interesting." Instead of acting like a human being, he delivers all of his lines with sexy bedroom eyes and in a moody whisper, even if just to say "let's go down this street."

The fact this movie was released so soon after the International Film Festival makes it an even bigger slap in the face – the culture holiday is over, and now we're back to our bleak reality. Please don't watch this movie. Don't let Hollywood get away with it again.

Kick Ass 2

3/5

Director: Jeff Wadlow

REVIEWED BY TAMARA SCOTT

BEING A BIG FAN OF THE ORIGINAL *KICK-ASS* film, I was prepared to be let down by the sequel. In particular, I was dubious as to whether the new director, Jeff Wadlow, would manage to reproduce certain aspects of the original film, such as the stylistic violence sequences and the low-key comic book feel.

A director always faces an added level of pressure when delivering a follow up, and Wadlow's task is made even harder by the fact that *Kick-Ass* was such a surprise hit. The gruesome sequel has received an impressive level of publicity recently, due in part to actor Jim Carrey's refusal to participate in any promotional efforts on the grounds that the violence of the Sandy Hook Elementary shootings had affected him deeply. Too late, mate – you still starred in the blood-soaked flick.

The first film was a relentlessly gruesome blood-fest, but its style had some inherent value. Sadly, and predictably, the sequel's fight scenes felt like old re-runs of Hollywood blockbusters, and hence lost their sense of realism. While the enlarged budget showed, it was clear that the money had been spent on explosions rather



than plot development – the narrative was so predictable that I could have written the synopsis before watching the film.

High-schooler Dave Lizewski (Aaron Taylor-Johnson) becomes the hero Kick-Ass again, and joins up with a group of normal citizens who have been inspired to fight crimes ... in costume. Chloë Moretz, who plays Hit-Girl, was a major reason that the original *Kick-Ass* was marvellous. Her combat sequences were the bloodiest and she was a subversive badass. In the sequel, however, we watch as Hollywood once again attempts to develop Chloë into the industry's new "it" girl. For the record, Hollywood: I did not relish Kick-Ass because Hit-Girl was a stunner who

just happened to be a super hero, I enjoyed it because this little girl was ripping full-grown men's guts out through their mouths.

I'd always thought of Moretz as a young starlet who could really act, but in this film she delivered a flaccid performance. *Kick-Ass 2* loses all of the original's sharpness, while desperately trying to convince the audience it is a credible contribution to the meta-superhero genre.

On the whole, cinematic violence has been handled most skilfully by contemporary Asian directors such as Chan-wook Park, who directed *Old Boy* (2003). Those guys know what they are doing.



Existenz

Director: David Cronenberg

CLASSIC FILM

BY CLASSIC BAZ

IT'S ALWAYS FUN TO WATCH FILMS MADE IN THE 80s or 90s and see how they thought the world would be by now. Disappointingly, we still don't have hover cars or pill-based nutrition.

What we are getting closer to achieving, however, is virtual reality. Sure, virtual reality the way these films portray it is still out of reach, but devices such as the Oculus Rift (a mechanism worn over your head whilst playing video games) are getting excitingly close.

David Cronenberg's mind-bending 1999 sci-fi film *Existenz* depicts a future in which video games have changed from electronic devices to biological ones, and are hooked straight into the human nervous system by way of bio-ports. These organic game pods create games inside the gamer's mind, distorting reality for those who play and rendering gamers unable to discern the real world from the game world. The story follows the world's greatest game designer, Allegra Gellar (Jennifer Jason Leigh) as she and wary security guard Ted Pikul (Jude Law) run away from a group of extremists – "The Realists" – who are seeking to destroy all game pods in

the hopes of preserving reality.

Like all of Cronenberg's movies, it takes significant brainpower to decipher. The reward, however, is a film full of significant themes and ideas that make you rethink many of society's decisions regarding science, technology and entertainment.

Existenz is also filled with some beautifully crafted imagery: the meal Jude Law's character must eat in order to construct a weapon from the bones ranks alongside the Denethor's feast in *Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King* as film's most visually disgusting depiction of eating ever.

Though the film is now almost 15 years old, and video games and technology have changed remarkably in that time, Cronenberg's film is still relevant to our times. If you watch it, no doubt you'll agree that this is not a future we want for ourselves.



Sticky Date Muffins

I REALLY DON'T HAVE MUCH TO SAY ABOUT THESE, except a) they are so freaking good, and b) you'd be a fool, A FOOL I TELL YOU, not to whip some up on a lazy Sunday and revel in their (and your) greatness. (Also you feel less like a fatty eating a muffin than scoffing down a bowl full of the pudding form, "a" being the operative word here.)

Method:

1. Preheat the oven to 190°C and grease the muffin tin (or you could use cases).
2. Put the chopped dates, sugar, first lot of butter and one cup of warm water in a saucepan and place on a medium heat. Stir until the butter has melted and the sugar has dissolved. Bring the mixture to the boil for a couple of minutes and then remove from the heat. Stir in the baking soda and then leave to cool for half an hour or so.
3. Whisk the eggs and vanilla together in a jug and set aside.
4. Sift the flour and the mixed spice into a bowl and make a well in the centre.
5. Pour the egg mixture into the well, followed by the cooled date mixture.
6. Fold in the wet ingredients gently until all of the ingredients are just combined. Take care not to over-mix, or they'll turn out too dense – the batter should look a little lumpy.

Ingredients:

- > 200g pitted dates, chopped
- > 2/3 cup of soft brown sugar
- > 125g butter, chopped
- > 1 tsp baking soda
- > 2 cups flour
- > 1 ½ tsp baking powder
- > ½ teaspoon mixed spice
- > 2 free range eggs
- > 1 tsp vanilla essence

> For topping:

- > ¼ cup brown sugar
- > 1 tbsp butter
- > 2 tbsp milk

7. Fill each muffin hole about three-quarters full with the mixture. Bake for twenty minutes, or until the muffins have risen, are golden brown in colour, and come away slightly from the sides of the tin.
8. For the topping, put the second lot of sugar, the butter and the milk into a saucepan and stir over medium heat until the sugar has dissolved and the mixture is smooth.
9. Brush the hot sauce over the tops of the muffins (be generous) as soon as you have taken them out of the oven and repeat until you have used up all of the sauce. Leave the muffins in the tin for 15 minutes or so, and then gently loosen them with a knife before lifting out onto a wire rack to cool slightly. These are best served warm with a cuppa.



University Plaza Café

BY M & G

THE UNIVERSITY PLAZA CAFÉ IS LOCATED JUST inside the entrance to Unipol, which is attached to the Forsyth Barr Stadium. M and G enjoy the fact that all new buildings commissioned by the University tend to come complete with in-built café.

One Saturday morning M and G donned their sneakers and headed to Unipol to work up a sweat before trying out the Plaza. This café is definitely of the same ilk as the rest of those owned by the University, but its weekend hours, brunch menu and toys for the kiddies make it slightly more public-friendly. Unfortunately, M and G missed the brunch and so had to settle for some of the cabinet food instead.

M loves the fact that there are so many sneaky seats at the Plaza Café. M has had a few solo coffees there before class, hiding behind the plant partitions, and recommends this as a pre-lecture spot for those around College Tower or Teachers' College who need some breathing space. If you're anything like M, having people too close to you before your first coffee of the day is about as appealing as a foot-flavoured ice cream.

The lattes that M has ordered here have always been a bit sub-par; weak as piss with disappointing milk work. However the staff here are so lovely and helpful, and the food so well presented, that it's easy for this to go unnoticed.

Overall M and G enjoyed their Plaza Café experience. They recommend sticking to the smaller sizes, though, to avoid the too-milky-for-how-weak-it-is coffee situation. If you want to escape the hustle and bustle of uni life for a second, this is definitely a great place to sink into a corn fritter bap and enjoy a cup of joe before hitting class or the Robertson Library.



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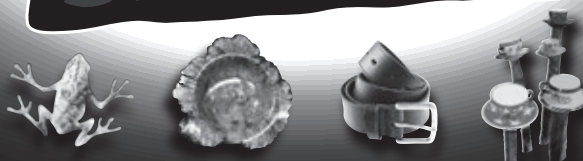
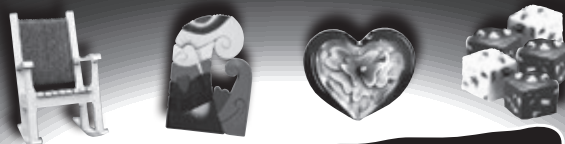
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Rayman Legends

Developed by Ubisoft Montpellier

Published by Ubisoft

Platforms: 360, PS3, Wii U, PC, PSV

9.5/10

THE GAMING INDUSTRY IS CURRENTLY FASCINATED with creating new and innovative new ways to play games. Don't get me wrong – I am very excited about the discoveries being made, but such an attitude tends to imply that we have fully utilised the mechanics we currently have. *Rayman Legends* proves that this is not the case.

It is no longer the heyday of the platformer. The 90s were all about platformers (and it's easy to see why when looking games like *Crash Bandicoot* and the original *Rayman*), but the genre lost popularity as 3D graphics became easier to render. However, *Rayman Legends* proves that while we now have technology capable of far more than side-scrolling, simple mechanics still have a place in this shiny new age of gaming.

Legends doesn't have a complex story; in fact, its story could hardly be more simple. Bubble Dreamer the wizard has populated the world with evil creatures that have captured the adorable Teensies. It is the job of Rayman and his friends to save these little fellas and free the world of Bubble Dreamer's evil. The world is broken up into various sub-worlds, each with its own theme and aesthetic, and Rayman must clear stages within these worlds by saving all the Teensies. The story, however, doesn't really matter. What this game really emphasises is the experience.

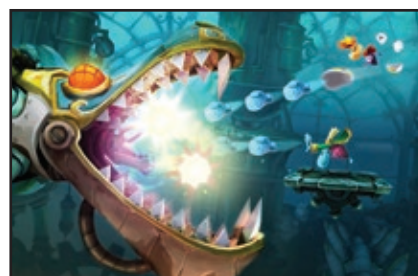
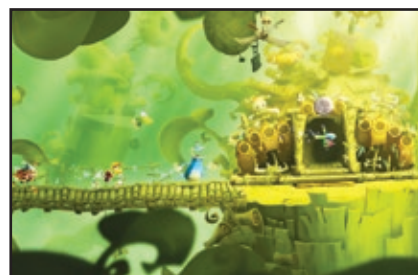
Legends constantly finds new ways to make you smile, whether it is the outstanding design, the hilarious and quirky character animations, or just the sheer beauty of the layered 2.5-dimensional landscape coupled with the unique and

triumphant soundtrack. All of these elements combine in each world's final level, and these finales play like the most badass music videos you have ever seen. An example is "Castle Rock": here, you run to a cover of the song "Black Betty" by Ram Jam, but your enemies are singing the lyrics in their own form of gibberish and all of the beats are synchronised to match your actions. Watch a video of this level at critic.co.nz/rayman – don't worry about ruining it for yourself, because although the video is awesome, playing the level is an experience in itself.

In a number of ways, the game rewards you just for playing. My favourite is the "lucky scratch" system, in which you receive a scratchy card for certain levels of achievement. This card can then be scratched, rewarding you with one of many different items or experiences. If you are lucky you will receive an Origin painting which, when unlocked, allows you to play levels from the equally-awesome 2011 game, *Rayman Origins*. *Rayman Legends* is thus two games in one, but you enjoy the *Rayman Origins* levels all the more because you earned them.

As if that weren't enough, the game also comes with a huge library of playable characters to unlock, a multiplayer platformer soccer game called *Kung Foot*, the ability to play the whole game co-op, and a challenge mode that is updated daily.

Rayman Legends is a game full of joy just waiting to be had, and it seems that there is no limit to what it has to offer. It is so exciting to see that even as we move into the next generation of gaming, we are still able to look back to our past and create amazing experiences using the expertise and knowledge gained from established mechanics.





The Bureau: XCOM Declassified

Developed by 2K Marin
Published by 2K Games
Platforms: 360, PS3, PC

6.5/10



AS FAR AS ORIGINAL PREMISES GO, ALIEN invasions are hardly groundbreaking. Sometimes, though, all you need is a fresh take to make something common feel original.

In the eyes of many, this is what the game 1994 *UFO: Enemy Unknown* (also known as *XCOM: Enemy Unknown*) achieved. This classic sees players contributing to three elements of the fight to save humanity from an alien invasion: resource management, base defence and strategic skirmishes.

Commonly listed among the greatest games of all time, *Enemy Unknown* proved to be a turning point in terms of gamers' perceptions – increasingly, gamers came to appreciate that games could be multi-dimensional, or offer more than one type of challenge or experience. A number of sequels were trialled, in which designers tried to play with the genre, but none matched the quality of the original.

Last year, a new remake was announced – *XCOM: Enemy Unknown* – which aimed to celebrate the original game while injecting it with some twenty-first century flair. The fact remains, however, that no genre-bending *XCOM* game has ever been a success.

Many gamers had high hopes for a first person shooter iteration of the series when it was first announced in 2006. After several years of silence, it was finally made public in 2010 that the project had been scrapped and was being relaunched as a

third person strategy game. That game finally arrived in the form of *The Bureau: XCOM Declassified*.

The Bureau's story takes place in the 1960s, which makes a refreshing change from the modern-day setting of most strategy games. Supposedly, this was done to allow the developers (2K) to base the story around the inception of the *XCOM* department – a department that was originally created to aid in the Cold War fight against the Soviet Union but that was forced to become an anti-alien task force after Earth was attacked by extra-terrestrials.

Disappointingly, however, the entire plotline of *The Bureau* not only ignores the original story, but virtually spits in its face. Every aspect, from the origins of *XCOM* to the aliens' psychology to the story surrounding protagonist Special Agent William Carter, contradicts well-established knowledge regarding the *XCOM* universe. This is a real shame – a story that built on the original universe would have won over newbies and existing fans alike.

The Bureau tries to infuse a level of intimacy into its storyline by including dialogue between colleagues at the *XCOM* base, reminiscent of the dialogue in *Mass Effect*. Dialogue options, however, do not influence outcomes, and as the writing is generally hackneyed, the result is occasionally cringeworthy.

The gameplay attempts to couple third-person shooting with the original game's strategic manipulation of squad members. Though less than

optimal, it works far better than many people guessed it would back in 2010. Switching from third-person shooting to a display screen in which you can assign orders – such as movement or abilities – to your crew members is cumbersome at first, but after some practice the ability to pull off a well-executed strategy is exhilarating.

The third-person shooting itself, however, is average, and is only made worse by the fact that the (limited) selection of weapons on offer all feel essentially the same. Thankfully, the game retains my favourite feature of the *XCOM* series: perma-death. Perma-death means that if one of your crew members (whom you have named, customised and "levelled-up") dies, they remain dead for the rest of the game. Unfortunately, this feature is now rendered useless by the introduction of regular checkpoints that allow you to instantly reverse this outcome.

The game could have used with a little more polish, thought, and loyalty to the original conception of the *XCOM* universe. It's frustrating to play, because it is so easy to identify elements that could have made the overall experience a more fulfilling one; watching potential being squandered is always sad.

Unfortunately, the curse of the *XCOM* shooter remains. I can deal with this, however, so long as *XCOM* strategy games continue to be produced. Speaking of which – an expansion has recently been announced for *XCOM: Enemy Unknown* at Gamescon. At least all the disappointed *XCOM* fans out there have that to look forward to.



Nine Inch Nails *Hesitation Marks*

4/5

Stylish and diverse; a worthy comeback.

MY, HASN'T TRENT REZNOR BEEN BUSY?

Between side projects, scoring films, raising sons and insulting fans over Twitter, the 48-year-old prince of industrial has somehow found the time to make another Nine Inch Nails album. I'll admit to feeling ambivalent when *Hesitation Marks* was announced. After the heights of his first three albums, I feel Trent really stumbled on 2005's *With Teeth* and 2007's *Year Zero*. Aside from a few tracks, these attempts to recast Nine Inch Nails as radio-friendly electronic rock were blunders. He regained his footing, however, with *Ghosts I-IV*, a double album of ambient instrumentals, and its swift follow-up *The Slip*, which was essentially *With Teeth* and *Year Zero* done right.

It was after this return to form that Trent put Nine Inch Nails on "indefinite hiatus." It seemed he would rather go out on a high note than risk trailing off into mediocrity. A good place to call it a day, I thought. But now, that satisfactory full stop has been turned into a question mark; Nine Inch Nails is back with a new album. Is eighth LP *Hesitation Marks* a glorious rebirth, a passable

victory lap, or an unnecessary disappointment?

Reznor certainly wants *Hesitation Marks* to feel like his best album ever, hence the extravagant tour plans, multiple masters, and series of artwork by Russell Mills (who designed the iconic cover of *The Downward Spiral* nineteen years ago). And while I'd hesitate to call it the greatest album in the Nine Inch Nails discography, it is certainly a worthy addition. Instead of rushing into its conception, Trent clearly spent some time plotting what he wanted *Hesitation Marks* to sound like. In the end, he went for an equal mix of old and new; namely, the brooding electronica of his recent works woven around muscular hooks and choruses that wouldn't sound out of place on *Pretty Hate Machine*. It is a winning formula, both harkening back to Trent's glory days and sounding very much like a fresh, modern album.

As can be expected, *Hesitation Marks* delivers several heavy, assaultive tracks such as "Came Back Haunted," a ghostly cousin of vintage Nine Inch Nails track "Into the Void." Also included are a number of more brooding and meditative songs, such as the ethereal "Find My Way" and

"While I'm Still Here." Its frequent shifts in tempo and volume give *Hesitation Marks* a dynamic, diverse feel. This diversity also extends to the album's emotional impact; while far from a happy record (the title references suicide, after all), it includes more major keys and uplifting lyrics than any prior Nine Inch Nails album. At time, however – such as on the post-punky "Everything" – these rays of light land awkwardly upon the scorched earth of Reznor's universe, but on the whole they are a welcome contrast to the venom and angst normally found there. Trent is clearly a happier person than he used to be (no doubt he is getting off on being a husband and a father), and I cannot see the positivity that has lent his music as a bad thing.

In addition to its wide-ranging sounds and emotion, the songs themselves on *Hesitation Marks* are fantastic. Reznor's songwriting seems to have matured since we last heard him on *The Slip*, each track here shimmering with detail and intent. Two in particular rank among Reznor's best: the *Downward Spiral*-worthy "All Time Low," a hellish funk track made of scabs and barbed wire, and the downright sexy post-industrial cut "Various Methods of Escape," with its snaking verses and addictive chorus. It is on these songs that Reznor sounds truly on top of his game, as creative and as charismatic as he's ever been. If *Hesitation Marks* is more than just a fluke, and Reznor is able to repeat its charms, I'm all for album number nine.

BE IN TO WIN!

HESITATION MARKS BY NINE INCH NAILS
(OR ANOTHER ALBUM OF EQUAL VALUE)

"Stylish and diverse; a worthy comeback." (4/5)

Check the Critic Facebook page on Monday to be in to win!



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Lustmord

The Word As Power

5/5

The voice is most powerful when wordless.

DARK AMBIENT IS A GENRE DRENCHED IN imagery of the ancient, the gothic and the biblical. Its blacker-than-black noises are derived from the vaults of industrial music, stretched into barren wastes and yawning abysses of sound. Often dark ambient songs are long and slow, crushing and engulfing the listener rather than thrilling them. While you may not find it exactly raising your pulse, you may well find it raising the hairs on your neck.

Lustmord is one of dark ambient's biggest names, with a career that has spanned three decades and explored the genre in many different forms. His latest, *The Word As Power*, is an album with a strong focus on vocals. Five years in the making, it features a host of guest singers (including Swans' dryad Jarboe and Maynard James Keenan of Tool) who chant and throat sing over tectonic plates of noise. It's vast. It's gloomy. It's gravely serious. It has no words, nor does it need them. In their absence, *The Word As Power* manages to ache with beauty, sadness, anger and hope, often not in isolation.

Many listeners will find the album appropriately daunting. At 75 minutes in length and without a syllable in English, from the outside *The Word As Power* will appear unassailable, impenetrable even. Your only hope of infiltrating it is by listening to it. Eventually, you'll stop finding yourself outside the album's granite gates, but within them. It may happen during the opening song, the cavernous "Babel," or after your first full listen through. Or perhaps your second, or even your third. But once inside, you'll be able to feel every note, every subterranean murmur,

every last facet and detail Lustmord spent half a decade carving.

The Word As Power is divided into seven songs, ranging between five and 17 minutes. And yet the sum of these parts is so seamless and whole, it is difficult to distinguish particular moments or songs as highlights. One track that does manage to rise above the rest, however, is "Grigori." Deep and reverberating, it doesn't ask for your attention so much as swallow it whole. Soriah, the Sufi throat singer who guests on the track, now ranks among my favourite vocalists of all time, just for his work on this song. Just as he sings without a single word, I cannot find a single word to describe him. If you're going to listen to any song this year, listen to this one. But do so in the context of the rest of the album.

It will be only too easy for people to dismiss *The Word As Power*, for any of a dozen reasons. It will be called boring. It will be called pompous. It will be likened to the *Gladiator* soundtrack, or any soundtrack that uses wordless vocals to suggest momentousness – wailing vocals during a death scene, earthen throat singing when a hero is crossing a desert. While those examples of vocal ambience merely reinforce an existing image, *The Word As Power* paints images of its own. All of the mythology of dark ambient – its angels, demons, wastelands and megaliths – is here in full force, more vivid and dramatic than Lustmord has ever conjured before.

The Word As Power is far from a humble album. It yearns to be the most epic, important collection of sounds you've ever heard. Let it be.

RADIO ONE 91FM 1 EVENT GUIDE

WEDNESDAY 11TH SEPT

ReFuel | Hunting Bears w./ The Fu King + Cult Disney. Free entry from 9pm.

First Church | New Zealand String Quartet presents Bravo Britten. 7pm.

THURSDAY 12TH SEPT

ReFuel | Freaky Meat w./ Ignite the Helix and The Amoeba. \$10 from 9pm.

The Regent Theatre | Traces. Acrobatics with street elements such as skateboarding, basketball and parkour, mixed with theatre and contemporary dance. Ticket information at regenttheatre.co.nz.

Queens | The Ruby Lady Video Release Party. w./ SoDiva, and live belly dance music by the Unfortunate Repercussions plus dance from Tribal Echo and The Ruby Lady. \$5 from 7.30pm.

FRIDAY 13TH SEPT

Queens | Laurel Halo. w./ Murderbike and DJ Aaron Hawkins. \$17 available from undertheradar.co.nz. \$20 doorsales.

ReFuel | Two Cartoons w./ Males, Astro Children, Ernesto Anemone, Deux Enfants, and DJ Tom Tremewan. Free entry from 9pm.

Dunedin Musos' Club | PCP Eagles I Hate The Mall Tour. 9pm.

SATURDAY 14 SEPT

Purple Rain Retro Cafe | Charisma Collective Launch Party. featuring Face Dancer, Birdation, Leon Neon, and Chemical as well as some surprise acts throughout the night and DJ sets from from DJ Tanner, Face Dancer and DJ Macbook Pro. \$10 entry includes a drink. Doors from 9pm.

ReFuel | The Datsuns. 8pm.

Queens | Two Buck Titties, Eddie Lederhead & Iron Mammoth. 9pm.

To include a Dunedin gig or event email us at r1@r1.co.nz

**FOR FULL LISTINGS VISIT
R1.CO.NZ/PLAYTIME**



What a Wheeze

BY DR. NICK

HI EVERYBODY, Med students are weird. I have a friend who has a fairly uncommon condition called Diabetes Insipidus, which is completely unrelated to the blood-sugar-related Diabetes Mellitus. When it comes up in conversation, most muggles do the socially acceptable thing and utter a token "oh, that must suck" before changing the topic to rugby and boobs. Med students, on the other hand, want to know everything about it: cause, treatment, prognosis, family history ... chronic conditions are fascinating! Except asthma. Asthma is the Ranfurly Shield of chronic diseases: nobody cares about it unless they've got it.

The reason people don't care is that asthma's so frigging common here in New Zealand. One in six adults have it, making it more common than the number of Tuesdays in a typical week. There is a lot of interesting research looking into why it's so common. The more credible theories centre on the role of viral infections, and the way our excessive cleanliness affects the ability of children's immune systems to distinguish "self" from "other." The less credible theories focus on ancient cults, demonic possession and gay marriage.

Despite asthma's prevalence, as a society we're not great at accepting it. Even though it's the cheapest, easiest and most effective way of treating asthma, sufferers don't like taking medications through their spacers because they're fat and ugly – the spacers, that is – and because they draw the attention of the other five in six people. Worryingly, many asthmatics don't use their preventer inhalers because they don't see the point, don't understand how preventers work, or just don't like having to take medication every day.

For most people, asthma is manageable and is more of a nuisance than a "chronic disease." It isn't an entirely benign condition, though, and severe attacks can be fatal. My homework for one in six of you is to learn what your meds do (particularly if you've got a preventer) and know your treatment plan, including what to do if you're sick or have a severe attack. The other five of you can relax and breathe easy this week.



Playing Science

BY BRYONY LEEKE

IN KEEPING WITH CRITIC'S THEME, THIS WEEK we're talking gaming. While lots of games feature science and sci-fi driven plotlines, this week we're highlighting the inverse: scientists who are using gaming to assist in their scientific discoveries. Believe it or not, you might be able to help cure cancer and AIDS using only your laptop!

Computer modelling has long been used as a problem-solving device in science, especially when problems revolve around determining unknown properties of molecules, such as their shape. Using computers to try out many possible combinations of shapes, scientists can identify the molecular structures that are most likely to occur in real life, and then test the accuracy of these results. What's more, by taking this just one step further and "gamifying" the computer models, some scientists have hit upon a brilliant (and fun) way to crowd-source scientific solutions.

One of the first examples of this idea was FoldIt, invented by Seth Cooper at the University of Washington. FoldIt followed on from a computer-modelling programme, Rosetta, which attempted to predict the complex ways proteins fold into the correct shape inside cells. In order to get more processing power, Cooper was hosting Rosetta on volunteers' home computers.

Having watched on the screensaver as Rosetta tested many different proteins, volunteers started writing in, saying they could see the computer making mistakes – and that they had a better solution. Struck by the idea that human intelligence might be better at the task than computer models, Cooper turned Rosetta into a game in which players compete and collaborate to find the best possible folded structure for various proteins. Success in the game is based on how stable a player's protein would be in a real cell.

A real-world success story for the FoldIt community came when some FoldIt teams succeeded

in modelling the structure of a "scissor-protein" found in an HIV-like virus. If you mess with this particular protein, the virus can no longer infect people, making it a great drug target. The successful creation of these drugs is now far more likely, thanks to the effort of the FoldIt players.

Games are also helping to fight cancer. Researchers get so many samples that it takes them years to analyse them all. Often all they want to know is whether there are weird looking cancer cells present and, if so, how many of them there are. Sound like something you could do? It is! Check out cellslider.net and add to the 1,710,763 samples analysed by people just like you. If you're late handing in an assignment, "I was helping to cure cancer" is one of the better possible excuses!

The research team who produced FoldIt have followed up recently with a similar game called EteRNA, which aims to increase knowledge about the folding and structure of RNA. RNA is a cousin to DNA and performs an amazing variety of functions, including translating the information contained in DNA into proteins, silencing genes when they aren't needed, and catalysing reactions within cells.

EteRNA is exciting because the RNA structures worked out by players will be tested in the real world. The players design different RNA structures, and the best are synthesised and tested for functionality! These real-world results are then released so that players can see how their RNA performed. The overall goal is to create a catalogue of RNA designs that can be studied for their potential to target illnesses and improve our understanding and control of living cells.

So next time you are in the market for a new game, consider collaborating with other gamers all over the world to do some good for Science, Bitches!



You Wouldn't Download a Gun ... At Least, You Shouldn't

BY CALLUM VALENTINE

IN MAY THIS YEAR, GAMING GIANT ELECTRONIC Arts announced it would no longer be using officially licensed firearms in its video games. The move was a backpedal in reaction to an extremely poorly thought-out charity campaign launched as part of the stupidly-named Medal of Honor: Warfighter. The campaign, in a partnership with actual arms manufacturers, directed players to buy real weapons. The profits were to be given to a veterans' charity, demonstrating a staggering corporate imperviousness to irony.

The game itself was another one of those camo-brown shlock-fests with an audience composed primarily of trigger-happy teens calling each other "faggots" on Xbox live. If that line just made you call me a faggot, come at me brah. I'm sure you can headshot me from 200 feet no problems. I'll still be trying to figure out how to aim properly with a stick. Give me a mouse any day.

Let me be clear, I fucking love video games. I'm an indoors kinda guy, and I will freely admit to spending hundreds of hours hunched over a PC in virtual worlds. But seriously, fuck those endlessly bland Call of Duty-esque titles. Endlessly re-living world wars is strange enough when it's on the History Channel, and it's even more odd in video games.

With Fran as president, OUSA has been making bold moves to support the New Zealand E-Sports scene, including running a tournament for Activision's Call of Duty: Black Ops 2. So it's a good time to take a look at links between the arms industry and the games we invite into our living rooms. Is buying these war-fetishising camo-laden-jizz-fests a moral choice akin to our slave-sneakers and Foxconn iPhones?

Broadly, yes. As games became more realistic, the weapons manufacturers started to take note of their copyrighted designs being used in games, and triple-A publishers like EA and Activision signed agreements licensing particular firearms for virtual use. When sued by a helicopter manufacturer over Battlefield 3, EA claimed fair use, arguing for their right to tell a story just like a writer mentioning a particular weapon in a novel.

To a certain extent, good on them, but it makes you wonder why games need to be so damn realistic. Doom had a "pistol" and a "shotgun" and I don't think it suffered for it – although check out "Wiki of the Week" to hear from people who disagree.

While there is no proven link between video

game violence and the real deal, the way the news media has cried wolf on this particular issue papers over the deeper, and painfully obvious, problem of interdependence between the video game and arms industries. Nearly all video game characters shoot things, and we don't stop to question exactly why this has to be the case. Even innovation comes with a hand cannon of some variety: both Portal and indie smash hit Antichamber use the first-person shooter mechanic as a springboard for their innovations.

My love for the games industry is matched in equal parts by my exasperation with its often-lackluster artistic output. Yes, there are stunning, innovative games that emotionally impact the player, but they are still often eclipsed by broad, clichéd storylines with guaranteed appeal. Take Far Cry 3. I love that game – I shot a bear with a rocket launcher – but I'd prefer not to be patronised afterwards by one of the lead writers claiming that the crowd-pleasing violence is somehow "ironic."

I'll take the welcome abstraction of sci-fi weapons for now, both for my piece of mind and so that I can spend another 200 hours playing the Mass Effect trilogy.

WIKI OF THE WEEK

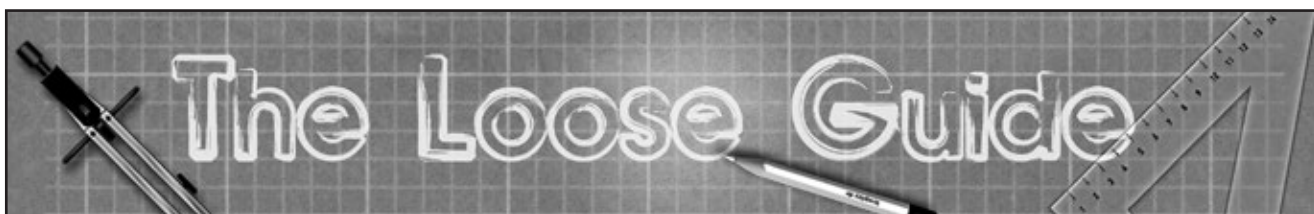
IN RESEARCHING THIS PIECE I CAME ACROSS A wiki as deliciously pitiful as Conservapedia, if not more so. The Internet Movie Firearms Database (imfdb.org) is why GCSB watch-lists may be justified after all (just kidding, they aren't). This careful, meticulous cataloguing of weapons of personal destruction is a bang-bang fetishist's wet dream.

Want to know which guns featured in 1974 Murder on the Orient Express? Of course you don't – you're probably too busy cleaning your Colt 45 and thinking that if your flatmates mess up the kitchen ONE MORE TIME you might need to throw it in the Leith. But just in case you did want to know, it's all here on the IMFDB.

Articles for each film, video game or television show come fully loaded with obsessively

captured screenshots. You can just imagine the heavy breathing of a top contributor, frantically hitting the pause button (like a gunpowder infused snap), capturing that perfect Glock shot and taking notes.

With over 13,000 articles, and 9,000 gun-to-tin' Facebook fans, the IMFDB really puts that overly long Coro St article on Wikipedia into psychotic relief.



How to Get Your Parents Off Your Case

BY CAMPBELL ECKLEIN

NO MATTER WHO YOU ARE, AT ONE TIME OR another you've probably been on the receiving end of an advance from a pushy, nosy, contentious or overly concerned parent. Maybe you have two of them. Maybe even more. Whatever your situation, be it going home for a "break" (read: free food) or getting hounded about searching for a summer job/ real job/ life, there are times when you just want your parents to back off – but for some reason you can't quite bring yourself to tell them this. In my experience, the best approach is prevention rather than correction. Make life easier for yourself and everyone else by becoming a parent whisperer.

Whether you're actually doing something wrong or not, your outward persona around your parents has the ability to either placate or exasperate them. Try to cultivate a sweet, cheerful, outgoing

attitude that you can switch on when you come into their proximity – turning on "angel mode" should be your first line of defence in any situation. After all, it's hard to argue with an angel.

Smile and greet them enthusiastically whenever you see them. Always act like you'd love to stop and talk to them if they didn't seem so busy/ important/ drunk. Start getting up at a human time of day, and jump out of bed to make coffee and fry some eggs. Make sure they see you doing this. (If you're normally a sullen, emo brat then you may want to ease into this one so as not to arouse suspicion.)

The best way to avoid interfering/ nosy parents is not to demand privacy and boundaries, but rather to over share. If they ask you where you're going, don't just say "out" – give them an

exhaustive run-down of your plans (probably censored) and before you know it, they'll lose interest and walk off. You have to make them believe that your life really is as mundane as theirs. Be sure to also ask them about their life and daily activities to create the impression of an open exchange channel, hereby reassuring them that there is no need to subject you to the fucking third degree.

If all else fails and your gentle approach is failing to penetrate the solid wall of years of built-up consternation, all you can really do is try to dodge conflict entirely. Ignore inflammatory remarks even if you have an excellent rebuttal. You may have to occasionally pretend to agree with their ridiculous opinions and demands, but this will be less frustrating if you think of it as humouring them because they're old.

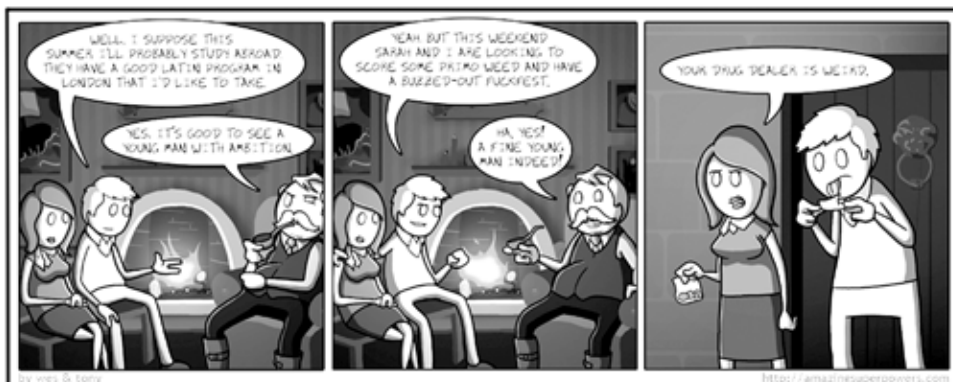


PBF
Durab Inc.

Find more of The Perry Bible Fellowship at pbfcomics.com

ASP
Fine Young Man

To see more ASP go to amazingpowers.com



Steve Drain

The Westboro Baptist Church

WESTBORO BAPTIST CHURCH HAS BECOME infamous over the past twenty years for its stridently anti-gay messages and picketing of soldiers' funerals. Steve Drain is a former documentarian who joined the Church in 2001. Drain featured heavily in Louis Theroux's documentaries *The Most Hated Family in America* (2007) and *America's Most Hated Family in Crisis* (2011), and runs the media side of WBC.

I wanted to ask why you're seen as a hate group, and why your core message doesn't seem to come across. What is your core message?

Well first of all, the idea of being a hate group is a category mistake – it's equivocating on what the term "hate" is. We're not talking about a base human passion like you or I might feel, we're talking about an attribute of God. It's a perfect attribute just as his love and his mercy is. The hatred of God is outlined in the scripture three to four more times than his love: it's his fixed determination to punish the wicked in Hell for their sins.

When you say that they don't connect with that message, our job is not to make that connection, our job is to preach the word of God, and how it lands on the hearts of men is God's prerogative. So our core message is simply this: "the Bible's right and the moral standards of man are wrong." The fact people want to say we're a one-trick pony and all we're focused on is the issue of homosexuality is a misunderstanding. We didn't make homosexuality a front-burner issue, society did.

Your motivation is that you're doing God's will?

It's out of obedience to our god. It's out of love for our fellow man. Here's the irony for you – when the Lord says "love your neighbor as you love yourself" he's quoting from Leviticus 19:17 and 19:18, where the definition for how you love your neighbor as yourself is ... when you warn him that his sins are taking him to Hell. If you were about to walk off a cliff, is the loving thing for me to say "keep going," or is it to warn you and tell you to stop? That's what our job is. Whether or not you stop is God's business.

So you're saying it as loud as possible? Is that



the motivation behind going to funerals and other high-profile events, as well as having a lot of provocative signs?

We live in the soundbite generation, so every one of those signs we hold is only provocative to you because you don't understand the Bible sentiment or the Bible standard that's contained therein.

As far as going to funerals, dying time is truth time. There [are] only a couple of times in a man's life where he's going to truly contemplate where the eternal state of his soul will reside. So I don't think there's anything kinder we can do than show up at a funeral and say "look, he didn't die fighting for our freedoms, he died fighting for a nation that's awash in sin, and no God-fearing man would lift a finger fighting for a nation awash in sin."

As for high-profile events, when someone's in the media they have a considerable platform. When you acquire the attention of the media and you're not helping your fellow man by warning them about the condition of this earth, then when you quit this earth God will cast you to Hell.

Cool. So when everyone simply dismisses you as a hate group they're unable to see all of the reasoning you've been talking about, and instead put your behaviour down to ulterior motives?

You gotta ask the question, "what would be the point there?" Look, we're all educated people, hard-working people, what would be the point in just wanting to shout at people? It's an old tactic – if you can't poke a hole in the message poke a hole in the messenger. People want to call us loons, [so] here's what I say to

them: "there's a great advantage to know the wrong and right side of an issue. We've all read the scripture, we're all intelligent creatures like the rest of you."

I think what would help convince a lot of people that you guys are actually rational is an example of an intellectual struggle that faces the WBC and how the WBC overcame that. That would show people that your position stands up to criticism.

The only time a God-fearing man is going to struggle is when he's leaning on his own understanding. The Bible is an instruction manual for the rest of your life – when a man turns away from that standard and reasons with morality himself, that's when [he is] going to have difficulties. People at WBC, we don't intellectually struggle with anything. What we do is put our foolish, vain ideas away and focus on what the scripture has to say about it.

So you don't need to use reason because the Bible tells you exactly what to do? But obviously rationality had to be used to get to the belief that the Bible tells you everything. Rationality even comes into the reading and interpreting of the Bible, so what's been the most difficult challenge to your outlook that you've faced?

You're putting the cart before the horse there – we don't have an opinion and go to the scripture to see if it's supported. We go to the scripture and that tells us our position is. You're asking a question with no answer.

Okay.

[Editor – abridged]

ART WEEK

SEPTEMBER
16 - 20

ALL WEEK: STUDENT ART EXHIBITION
in the Union Hall daily, come see/buy some art!

ART INSTALLATIONS - some works require audience participation so keep your eyes peeled around campus!

TUESDAY: ARTIST/WRITER SPEED DATING - email artweek@ousa.org.nz if you want to meet some new potential collaborators!

WEDNESDAY: PECHA KUCHA NIGHT
Main Common Room at 7pm

THURSDAY: ART WEEK MARKET DAY
Union Courtyard from 9am - 3pm

THURSDAY: WHITE NIGHT GALLERY CRAWL
starts 5pm across Dunedin in many Art Galleries

ousa

otago uni students' association

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT OUSA ART WEEK EVENTS
HEAD ONLINE TO OUSA.ORG.NZ/EVENTS/ART-WEEK/

THE REVOLUTION WILL NOT BE TELEvised



1
91 FM

W/ OLIVIER & FRIENDS

FRIDAY MORNINGS 10-12

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1
91 FM

**ROOTS
&
KULTURE**
WITH
JUNGLEFARI

SATURDAY 5 - 7PM
RADIO ONE 91FM

WWW.R1.CO.NZ



Scarfie Army Clean Up Day!

The Scarfie Army and OUSA students are getting together to do a bit of a clean-up! If you want to be involved, report to the OUSA Recreation Centre on Albany Street or M block at Polytechnic on Harbour Terrace any time between 11am and 12 noon, Sunday September 15th. You'll be issued rubbish bags and gloves and directed to an area for attention before returning with bags at 1pm. Spot prizes and a free BBQ will be held for all participants.

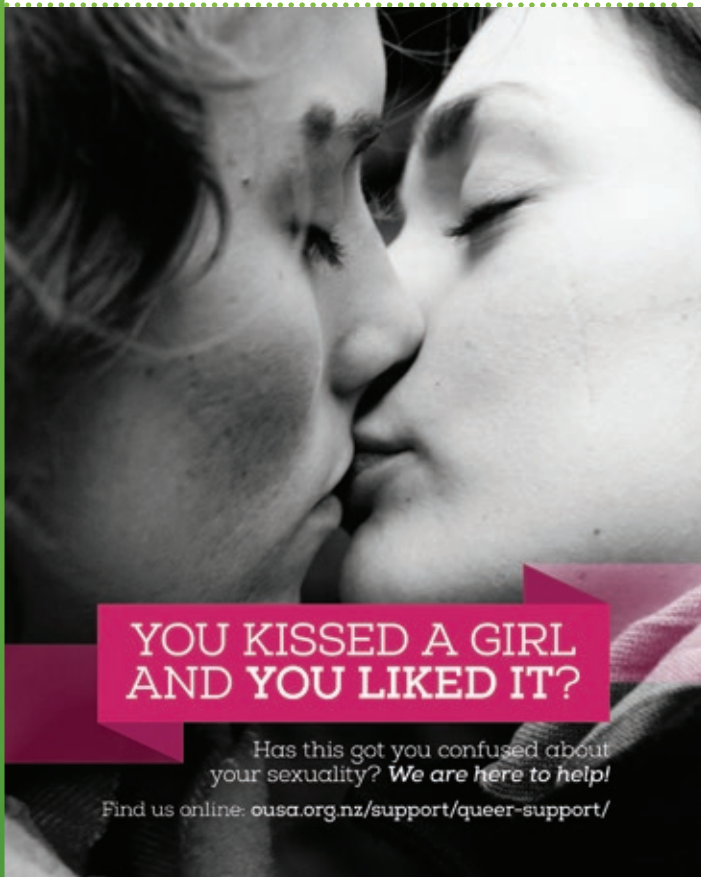
OUSA Executive Nominations now open

It's the big election of the year for OUSA, and if YOU want to keep OUSA cranking how you want it, then make sure you're nominated! You've got until the 19th of September at 4pm, so have a good think about how you'd run OUSA differently. We want you on board, so get involved and get nominated!

HUNGRY?!

For next to nothing the OUSA Rec Centre (at 84 Albany Street) has a range of food options to keep your belly full including

- Free Breakfasts Monday to Friday 9am-10am
- \$5 frozen meals (chef prepared, home-style goodness)
- \$3 lunches Monday to Friday (legendary!)



**YOU KISSED A GIRL
AND YOU LIKED IT?**

Has this got you confused about
your sexuality? **We are here to help!**

Find us online: ousa.org.nz/support/queer-support/



President's Column

By the time you read this column, nominations for the 2014 OUSA Executive will have opened.

You should definitely run for the Executive. Why? We'll there are quite a few reasons, but for me these stick out like a crying baby on a bus ride from chch to dunners...

1. Be the change you believe in

You can make a big impact on the university, the city and the country. Is there something grinding your gears? Are you annoyed that OUSA actively assisted in Hyde Street this year? Run for the exec and change it. Do you think that we didn't go far enough in trying to make Hyde Street safer? Run for the exec and change it.

Pretty much everything can be changed with enough willpower and with enough attention. This year's executive and I have done some awesome stuff: (a) Drafted minimum housing standards legislation, (b) Created an online platform to rate flats, (c) Won students a tertiary student discount for buses, (d) Secured funding to run a relationship safety campaign, and (e) Smashed out the biggest and best Orientation around the country.

2. Make lifelong friends (and enemies)

There's something special about working with a group of inspired and motivated young people determined to change the world. You'll definitely make lifelong friends. Conversely, you'll also make lifelong enemies - but that's arguably a good thing. Every good show has a protagonist and this might be an opportunity for you to find the Gary to your Ash.

3. It looks great on your CV

OUSA is a multi-million dollar organisation with a \$3 million budget. To be in charge of an organisation like that is the equivalent of CV gold.

4. #swagyo

You lose nothing by running even if you don't win. The campaign trail is a great experience and definitely builds up a lot of skills. Just get out there and yarn, or be like me and make a video parody. Easy.

Get all the info at ousa.org.nz, email secretary@ousa.org.nz or pop into OUSA's main office for a nomination form!

For now, Team Rocket's blasting off again... until next week!

The maverick

Ps. Don't forget to get along to the Dunedin Craft Beer & Food Festival this Saturday! \$19.90 + bf for students if you get yours before the day!

KNOX COLLEGE



THE BOTANS:
BUZZ. 3 LEMONADES.



THE STADIUM: SING THE MĀORI VERSE OF "GOD DEFEND NEW ZEALAND." 3 LEMONADES IF SUCCESSFUL.

ARANA:
TEXT A FRIEND.
6 LEMONADES.

ST. MARGARET'S:
NO LEMONADES.

UNICOL:
3 LEMONADES.



ALBANY STREET:
WOULD YOU RATHER. 3 LEMONADES.

LIBRARY:
QUESTION TIME. 4 LEMONADES.

CASTLE STREET:
THE FIRST PERSON TO PRODUCE A FLAME WINS 5 LEMONADES.

MINIGAMES:

TOUCH SOMETHING: The player who lands on the square chooses something to touch. First person to touch it wins. The player choosing does not participate.

HIGH STAKES: Everybody rolls. The player with the highest roll gets that number of lemonades. If there is a tie, use tiebreaker rounds.

A SHIP CAME INTO HARBOUR: Seriously? You should know the rules to this one!

CALL A STRANGER: Everybody calls a stranger, and tries to keep them on the line as long as possible. Last player standing wins.

QUESTION TIME: Ask the player to your left a question. They must respond with a question. First person to make a mistake loses.

NEVER HAVE I EVER: The player who lands on the square says "never have I ever ..." followed by something they have never done. Any players who have done the act in question drink lemonade.

BUZZ: Go around in a circle, counting aloud from one. Every multiple of seven, or number containing the integer 7, is replaced by the word "buzz." Players are eliminated when they make a mistake. Last player standing wins.

TEXT A FRIEND: Let someone send a text from your phone. Players who agree win.

THE COOK:
8 LEMONADES.

GEORGE STREET:
DO A FUNKY DANCE. OTHER PLAYERS RATE YOU OUT OF TEN,
AND YOU WIN THAT NUMBER OF LEMONADES.

THE INTERSECTION OF DOOM:
CALL A STRANGER.
5 LEMONADES.

THE DCC:
CLOSE YOUR
HAND IN TH
THE FIRST T
6 LEMONAD

AQUINAS COLLEGE