

Reflections on Van Ownership

By Matthew Russo ↵ September 5, 2013



I own a van. I won't apologize for that. But due to popular demand (actually the demands of one person, and he knows who he is), I will write about it.

Besides the terror of the first few months of driving (including being so paranoid once about hitting a child that I called the police; they were not very reassuring [I didn't actually hit anyone, which I should've known when I returned home and there wasn't a little girl stuck in my grill]), the difficulty of parking the monster, and the forty dollars I spend weekly on a half tank of gas, the thing about owning a van is that people make certain assumptions about you, either you're some kind of bum or a sexual deviant (read: sexual predator).

At least one person has referred to my vehicle as a "creeper van." First of all, I'm not a creeper. I don't creep. I lurk. There's a difference. Secondly, my van has windows in the back. Sure, they're tinted but not for any nefarious purpose. I assure you that there neither ropes nor chains in my vehicle, no handcuffs in the glove box, no gags underneath the seats, and definitely no duct tape in the back.

"Ah-ha, you didn't say anything about zip ties."

Shhhhhhhhhhhhhhh! I asked you not to mention those.

(Editor's Note: After this, quite frankly, disturbing attempt at a joke, we searched Matthew's van, and we can assure you that there are, in fact, no zip ties in it. You can all sleep more soundly now. However, we did discover an unsettling sticker on his back door that appears to be Mario violating Yoshi. So, sleep soundly but still stay away from him.)



Keep in mind stereotypes exist for a reason. The other day, I heard on the radio that some guy tried to abduct a little girl. Fortunately, she escaped, but the police were still looking for the perpetrator. Can you guess what he was driving? If you said a van, congratulations, you have the reading comprehension skills of a small child. Not just any van, a white van, the same color as mine, which made me say, “Oh, shit, now people are going to think I’m a kidnapper.” Then upon further reflection, “Maybe they already thought that.” Screw you all for thinking that.

I’m sorry. You probably weren’t thinking that. Maybe to you a van isn’t a kid snatching device; to you (and fathers of teenage daughters everywhere) it’s a bedroom on wheels. One of my coworkers had the same idea, I guess, when he asked me, “Hey, Matt, how much ass have you gotten in that van?” To which, I replied, “None.” He was stunned, incredulous, dismayed, and utterly, utterly heartbroken. After pulling himself together, he asserted that if he was in my position he would be drowning in mammaries and posteriors (I’m paraphrasing a little).

It wasn’t the first time a co-worker asked me an odd question about my sex life. In fact, on more than one occasion, rather than being asked if I have a girlfriend, I’ve been asked if I have a kid. I’m not quite sure what this means. On one hand, they are assuming that a woman would have sex with me. On the other hand, they are basically saying, “You look like the kind of guy who has unprotected sex.” I wonder if the van has anything to do with that perception.

While some (delusionally) think that a van would benefit one’s romantic life, a recent yogurt commercial demonstrates how women really feel about guys who drive vans. These women are sitting around some living room discussing a bad first date (and eating yogurt obviously). All she has to say is “he showed up in a van,” and the other women go, “ohhhhhhh.” Not the kind of “oh” when you realize you forgot your phone, it was the kind of “oh” you would say to a friend when he tells you he split his pants in a roomful of people, an “oh” of great misfortune.

It’s not all bad news. For instance, if I get in an accident with someone, the odds are in my favor survival wise since the van’s so damn big.

“But what if you get in an accident with a bus or an 18-wheeler?”

What if I fall down the stairs on the way to class and crack my skull? You gotta think positive, man. I've never been in an accident. So, there's that. I have, however, had some near misses, such as the other day when I almost hit a man who was crossing Kingshighway. People in St. Louis really need to stop walking in the middle of the street. If you've never driven around South City, go ahead and try it. People just do not give a shit.

Readers, I'm going to help you out. Here's how to test if someone is an asshole: if they stroll leisurely in front of a moving car, they're an asshole. A good person would either wait until the vehicles have passed to cross or run (or jog, I guess) to get out of the way as quickly as possible. You can thank me later for pointing out all the assholes in your life. But if you happen to be an asshole, stay out of the way of my van. You've been warned.

(Editor's Note: The Fontbanner and Fontbonne University in no way endorse mowing down pedestrians, even if they really, really deserve it. Drive safe.)

Behind a Tibetan Chant

By Emily Brennan ◌ September 8, 2013



Growing up in a ritual-based Catholic community, I have always found the more mystical aspects of Eastern religions both foreign and fascinating. So when I learned that Tibetan Buddhist monks from the Drepung Gomang Monastery were visiting Fontbonne, I immediately penciled in the date. In particular, I hoped see the monks perform some chanting. You just don't see stuff like that in a Catholic church, and I was thrilled at the opportunity to witness it firsthand.

I was not disappointed. The monks opened their presentation with a twenty-minute chant for world peace. The instant the chant began, I was already taken aback. Expecting to hear calm, measured voices conducive to relaxation or meditation, I heard the monks chant in harsh, gargly tones. Their voices were rough, as though they were speaking from the far back of their throats to purposefully create a non-uniform sound. All nine monks chanted together, amplifying the harsh sounds I was so unused to hearing.

After a few minutes, the chanting suddenly stopped leaving an expectant silence upon the crowd. What followed was a new section of the chant, much slower than before. The monks filled the gymnasium with deep, rich voices now smoother and more melodious than before. Harmonies were added, and their deep voices interweaved to form a sweet, pulsating melody.

Despite my initial surprise, this combination of rough and smooth tone qualities created a unique and beautiful style of music. While I could not understand their words, I could tell that the monks' chants had distinct lyrics and repeating choruses. Their agile voices sang the intricate melodies with precision and their voices blended to perfection.

But what did it all mean? To be honest, I wasn't sure. I found the chant calming and treading close to sacred ground, yet I couldn't articulate any deeper meaning.

One of the older monks, seemingly the leader of the group, explained the meaning behind the chant. He first noted that "Many young people misunderstand chanting...they do not see what it is for... what good stems from it". He continued by asserting that sometimes the direct results of praying for "world peace" can be difficult to see.

But the elder monk explained, saying that chanting is partially for the chanter's own benefit. He argued that every thought and action has either positive or negative motivations, and these motivations directly affect the merit of one's actions. Good thoughts lead to good actions while negative thoughts lead to bad actions. By focusing on positive thoughts through chanting, he maintained, one harvests the proper motivation to complete good actions.

I found this message simple yet sage. It reminded me of the famous quote attributed to Mahatma Gandhi "Be the change you wish to see in the world." If you want to create a peaceful world, why not

start with what you can directly control, like your own thoughts and actions?

And so, despite my initial surprise from the Tibetan chanting, learning from the monks was as rewarding as I had hoped. Indeed, I am still in awe of my good fortune- Not only did I witness an authentic Tibetan Buddhist chant like I hoped to, but I even heard the monks interpret the meaning behind their chants with their utmost wisdom.

Tivoli Kicks off “Reel Late” Lineup with Grease Sing-A-Long

By Amanda Teeter ↴ September 8, 2013



Summer nights are drawing to a close, and as we all head back to Fontbonne University audiences at the Tivoli this past weekend got a chance to return to another beloved school: Rydell High.

Each Fall, the Tivoli theatre on the Delmar Loop hosts a series of midnight films on Friday and Saturday nights called “Reel Late at the Tivoli,” in past years hosting such cult favorites as *Nightmare on Elm Street*, *The Breakfast Club*, *Repo! The Genetic Opera*, and, almost every Halloween, *Rocky Horror Picture Show*. This year, on August 23, they started their new season with the 1978 classic, *Grease*.

As is customary for “Reel Late at the Tivoli” Wearemoviegeeks.com writer Tom Stockman entertained the audience with trivia and prizes before the movie, hitting them with tough questions like “What is the name of the principal of Rydell High?” and “What is the song that Sandy and Danny sing together at the carnival?” (Mrs. McGee and *You’re The One That I Want*, respectively) the answers to which the audience of dedicated fans burst out with enthusiastically before bouncing excitedly to collect their prizes. The trivia game is always enjoyable at “Reel Late” showings, as the audience is often dense with die-hard fans who know the answers to every question and more self-proclaimed “movie geeks” who enjoy spending their free Friday and Saturday nights up until 2 AM surrounded by other cult film enthusiasts.

Despite the late hour, the excited and presumably caffeinated audience was full of energy as Stockman took his seat and the screen illuminated that familiar beach scene.

Even those in the audience who knew the film by heart (and they were easy to spot, as they were quoting dialogue along with the characters) were entertained by the Sing-A-Long version’s clever additions to the movie. Pictures and additional comments popped up on the screen as the story played out. Hearts surround Danny and Sandy as they kiss, and during the song *There Are Worse Things I Could Do*, when Rizzo reflects that “the neighborhood thinks I’m trashy and no good, I suppose it could be true” the Sing-A-Long assures us with scrolling letters that “It’s true.” The famously too-dirty-for-a-PG-movie musical number *Greased Lightnin’* was also edited for entertainment purposes, as the pop-up lyrics censored themselves by omitting the offending words and replacing

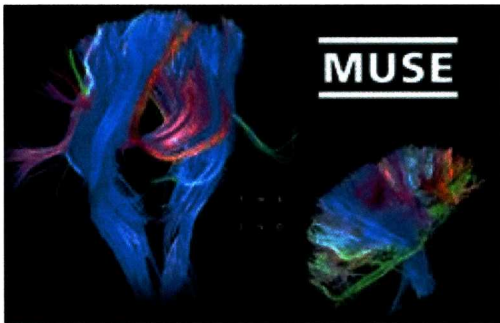
them with pictures. Many of us know these lyrics by heart already, but as far as the translation can tell us, for *Greased Lightnin'*, the chicks will squirt cans of whipped cream at the audience, and when the T-birds finish their car they will, apparently, be getting lots of cow udders.

The energy never died down, even as the final musical number *We Go Together* faded away and Danny and Sandy drove off into the clouds. The audience filed out still laughing and teasing each other about their fumbled attempts to sing along to lyrics such as “Shoo-wop sha whada whadda/Yippidy boom da boom/Chang chang changity chang shoo bop/That's the way it should be.”

The Tivoli will continue their season with some exciting favorites such as *Fight Club*, (September 13-14) *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, (Sept 20-21) *Psycho*, (Oct 4-5) and *Donnie Darko* (Oct 11-12) along with the 2010 instant classic, *Scott Pilgrim vs. The World* (Sep 27-28) to be performed with a live shadow cast.

Under the Microscope: Muse- The Second Law

By Richie Kemper ↻ September 10, 2013



Muse's new album, *The 2nd Law*, is the band's sixth studio release. The English rockers throw caution to the wind in an attempt to create a record unlike any of their previous offerings. What they retain is the typical prog-rock idea of concept albums they have become known for. I won't fault you if the album's title had you scratching your head (we all can't be well-read physicists). The album is loosely based around the second law of thermodynamics and economic/social collapse. While not as intricate as, say, *Dark Side of the Moon*, the album gets its point across. They dabble in the recent trends of dubstep and EDM (electronic dance music). It comes off a little clunky at times and is sure to create a firestorm of debate amongst the band's faithful listeners.

The first track on the album, *Supremacy*, sets the pace for what to expect in the coming 53 minutes. The song opens with a back and forth between a scraping guitar and the rest of the band. The song then segues into an apocalyptic Kashmir-esque riff. The storm subsides giving way to a somber military march. Lead singer Matt Bellamy then chimes in, "Wake to see/Your true emancipation is a fantasy." Getting down to the business in the chorus he continues, "I am on to you/This time, it has come to destroy/Your supremacy." The music fades out with a guitar line that very well could have been used in a James Bond flick. The song does its job in keeping me interested in sticking around for the rest of the album.

The band delves into the world of EDM with this next track. As one of the early singles from the album this song has since received much radio air time. *Madness*, based around an astonishingly catchy bass synth line, attempts to make sense of a seemingly failed relationship. Bellamy captures the evolution of thought from reeling from the failure to learn from the relationship and eventually being hopeful for the future, whatever it may be. Although I enjoyed the band's break from convention on this song, I don't believe fans will be begging for EDM Muse inspired album anytime soon.

Panic Station is up next, and this one immediately slaps you in the face. Imagine if Freddie Mercury and the rest of the guys in Queen had started their careers in this decade, and suddenly you could see them writing *Panic Station*. Another bass driven track, this one is far more aggressive than *Madness*. I can see why this song was touted around as a single nearly six months after the album's release. It is very pop oriented and radio friendly, a wise choice for the band to promote far after the initial release to spark some interest back into the album.

Prelude, with all its bells and strings, serves as the lavish introduction to *Survival*. Along with being the first single from the album, *Survival* was also the theme song for the 2012 Summer Olympics in London. This could very well be used as the theme for the history of human survival and advancement through the past 200,000 years (give or take). Chock full of energy and motivation, Bellamy and company issue a challenge to the listener to realize their full potential. The cherry on the top is Bellamy's falsetto scream to end the battle hymn. If this song doesn't get your blood pumping, it's time to check your pulse. Stat!

Animals is the hidden gem of the album. The song starts off with a curious melody which sounds as if it were coming straight from Pandora's Box. Where *Survival* strived to paint a positive picture of ourselves, *Animals* tears the poster right back down. The band's distaste for what our civilization has evolved into is ever prevalent. Money put before humanity, excess in place of prosperity, the insatiable love of power.

Animals sets the stage nicely for the album's title track, *The Second Law: Unsustainable* by painting the nature and future of human existence in a darker hue. Starting off with a barrage of furious violins, the song builds towards an apathetic female voice reciting the Second Law of Thermodynamics which the band states as being: "All natural and technological processes proceed in such a way that the availability of the remaining energy decreases. In all energy exchanges, if no energy enters or leaves an isolated system the entropy of that system increases. Energy continuously flows from being concentrated to becoming dispersed spread out, wasted and useless. New energy cannot be created and high-grade energy is being destroyed. An economy based on endless growth is unsustainable."

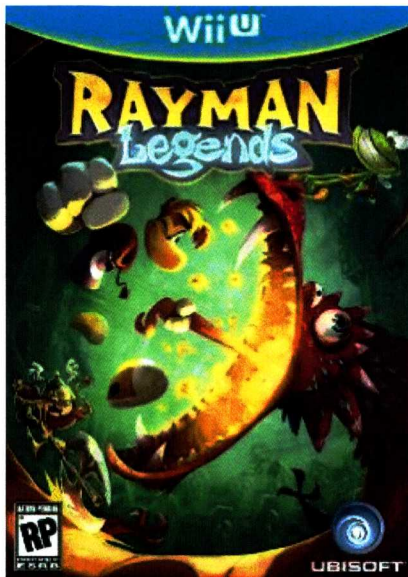
This is a lot to digest on first listen. Now I know what you're thinking: "Ok, this is great and all, but how does this actually apply to a system such as our economy or social structure?" I had the exact same question arise. If we break down the law into pieces it is easier to digest and apply to a complicated system such as our economy. How the Second Law relates to the economy is based off of energy (money). If money sits idly in banks or elsewhere and is not circulated through commerce this turns our economy into an isolated system, increasing the entropy (disorder) of said system. New money can technically be printed, but is not backed by high grade energy (valuable resources) such as gold, silver, platinum etc. There is a finite amount of these valuable resources in the world to back our currency; once they leave our system or are spent we can no longer rely on their usage. An economy based on endless printing of money without the means to back it is unsustainable. They then go on to apply the same theory to technological innovation along with human advancement. If this hasn't caught your attention you need look no further than the cold and calculating voice of machinery which wastes no time in mockingly reminding the listener, if we continue down this path, we are in fact unsustainable.

Rounding out the album is *The Second Law: Isolated System*. With no lyrics the band leaves you with a hauntingly beautiful track to allow you to gather your thoughts to. This turns out to be a much needed time of musical aided reflection especially after the heavy revelations brought about in *The Second Law: Unsustainable*. The song fades and your sense of the outside world returns, leaving you wondering was it all just a bad dream or a vision of things to come? This is for us to decide, together.

While the album seemed to stumble in some places, I found the overall package to be gleaming. I applaud the bands step out of their comfort zones in order to create a product unlike any they have previously. I'm a sucker for a good concept album to begin with, but I found the concept of the second law of thermodynamics and its application to our lives to be a timely and thoroughly interesting topic to base an album around. While not a perfect ten, the album is full of great songwriting and musicianship, I give it an eight out of ten. My three must-hear songs for the album are, *Madness*, *Survival* and *The Second Law: Unsustainable*.

Review: Rayman Legends

By Matthew Russo ² September 19, 2013



Release Date: September 3, 2013

Console: Wii U

Category: Adventure, Platforming

ESRB Rating: E10+

Rayman, the limbless protagonist (and hero to quadruple amputees everywhere [I feel as though that joke was in poor taste, oh well.]) returns in this sequel to 2011's *Rayman Origins*. In case you're wondering how you play with a limbless character, I'm sorry to shatter your illusions of a torso rolling through forests, across deserts, and over mountain snow. He has hands and feet but no arms and legs. His body just sort of hovers above his feet, and his hands float at his sides.

Story (8/10):

Rayman must save his world from the Bubble Dreamer's nightmares. Along the way he must rescue the teensies (short, blue-skinned, large-headed inhabitants of the world) and the heroes of realm (all similar-looking female warriors). If this all seems nonsensical to you, well, it is. But the story is really more of a background one. There aren't any long cutscenes or much explanation of any kind in fact. Still, when your entire world is made of dreams, it allows for fun elements, like punching a few bad guys so hard that they fly through space and land on a hellish planet occupied by little devils that pitchfork their behinds. You also fight a giant luchador (masked wrestler for you ignorant ones out there), and that's pretty cool.

Gameplay and Controls (8/10):

As a 2D sidescroller, the gameplay is basically running across the screen (there is a lot of damn running) and hitting things. The controls are simple and basically flawless. Although you do the same thing over and over, creative level design, challenging obstacles, and a general quirkiness prevent the game from feeling repetitive.

Some levels allow you to take control of Murphy (a green, grinning, fairy-like creature) to guide a character through a level. You use the touchscreen on the Wii U's gamepad to cut ropes, block fireballs, and otherwise help the other character reach the end. These levels provide a nice interlude between the rest and are, for the most part, well-executed. However, sometimes the AI that controls the character is stupid. The character will stand completely still for no reason rather than progressing, kill itself by jumping into a pit (or lava or whatever), or miss hidden areas. And if you miss something in these levels (a teensie to save, for instance), there is no way to make the other character turn around or to direct it to a specific area. This can be frustrating.

There are also "Back to Origins" levels, re-made levels from the previous game. These are a nice addition to the game and are different enough, graphically and objective-wise, to not feel like a rerun.

One new addition is the "Lucky" lottery ticket system in which the player receives a lottery ticket for collecting a certain amount of lums (glowing yellow living ball-things) in a level. Using the Wii U gamepad, you "scratch" off the ticket and it's pretty addictive, especially since you always win something (unlike real scratch off tickets where you're lucky if you win one lousy dollar).



Graphics and Sound (10/10):

The graphics of *Rayman Legends* are colorful and vibrant. Creative level themes, such as ancient Greece and Dia de los Muertes, contribute to the bright, quirky, cartoonish visuals of the game. If you like ultra-detailed hyper-realistic graphics where everything is various shades of brown and grey, this game isn't for you. But, for me, the fun art style is a nice break from the gritty shooters that flood the video game market. In short, it's a neat looking game.

The sounds are where the presentation really shines. The sound effects and music choices in each level are perfect. For example, the celebration music that plays at the end of a level if you collect enough lums makes you want to do a little victory dance in your chair (unless you sit on the floor, you animal). But the most fun are the special musical levels at the end of each world in which the gameplay is exactly timed to match the rhythm of the songs. The craftsmanship is phenomenal. And the song choices are awesome: a mariachi instrumental version of "Eye of the Tiger" and a version of "Black Betty" with grunting monsters replacing vocals (If you don't smile while playing this level, you are dead inside.).

Overall Recommendation (9/10):

All in all, *Rayman Legends* is a great game and a fitting sequel to *Rayman Origins* (which is also very good). However, since the story is so inconsequential, I feel like I recommend this to anyone even if they've never played *Rayman Origins* or a Rayman game of any kind. Plus, it's a pretty user-friendly game with simple controls. I think most people would enjoy this game, unless you're one of those poor souls who only play *Call of Duty* and *Halo*. In that case, I have one thing to say to you: I don't like you. For the rest of you, just play the game. It's a lot of fun.

Art: Virtual or Reality

By Richie Kemper ↴ September 30, 2013

If you have ever been told playing video games are a waste of time and you are murdering your brain cells, then this article is for you. If you have ever accused anyone of the above statement(s), then why don't you go ahead and stick around as well. See, I belong to a growing mindset which views playing video games as an art form not so dissimilar from, say, watching a movie or listening to an album in a society which views both cinema and music as undeniable forms of art.

What is art anyway? How do we define what is or isn't? The Oxford English Dictionary defines art as, "The expression or application of creative skill and imagination, typically in a visual form such as painting, drawing, or sculpture, producing works to be appreciated primarily for their beauty or emotional power." The definition in itself points out which items are typically regarded by most as being an acceptable form of art. If we look in the definition and disregard the examples given, we are left with art being, "The expression of creative skill and imagination which is also appreciated for their beauty or emotional power." The description fits video games to a t.

Video games are not just a clever way to pass the time. They can be quite interesting and thought provoking, much like a well written book. One such series of games I have played through is Assassins Creed. I won't give any spoilers away, but the premise of the series is the struggle between two factions (the Assassins and the Templars.) You primarily play as a present day Assassin who is reliving his ancestor's lives through a device called the animus. You get to play in such periods as twelfth century Jerusalem (around the time of the third crusades), Renaissance Italy, sixteenth century Constantinople and Revolutionary America. I know of no other art form where one can vicariously live through a character and genuinely explore these long lost locales. Historical figures who are resurrected by the game include King Richard the Lionheart, Leonardo Da Vinci, President George Washington and Saladin to name a few. Playing though this series is like jumping in a time machine and visiting some of the most influential countries and empires at the height of their power.

Not only does the series have beautiful renderings of these historical places, the game focuses on philosophical concerns as well. The glaringly obvious one, "Is it just to kill for the greater good?" The creed the Assassins live by reads, "Nothing is true, everything is permitted." A well thought out motto to be sure. This phrase is nothing new however, as the German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche mused over the same line in his book Thus Spoke Zarathustra. As Pablo Picasso famously said, "Good artists borrow, great artists steal."

A sign of a quality piece of art is the ability for the piece to connect with the viewer on an emotional level and flood the mind with memories uniquely belonging to the individual. One game I absolutely love for this is The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim. It is an open world game set in a fictional land called "Tamriel". The game conjures up images of what it may have been like to have lived in Medieval Europe (with the addition of dragons, magic and trolls.) The in-game scenery is absolutely breathtaking. From the blustery snow laden-peaks of the Throat of the World, to the cheerfully bustling city streets of Solitude, this game offers something for everyone. My personal favorite is the perpetually autumn tinted forest in an area called the Rift. The scenery reminds me of fall days back home when I would just set out on foot and explore the woods. The view of warmly hued trees and the sound of the wind gently whispering through the leaves completely fool my senses in believing I am indeed back home. When I feel especially home sick I will sometimes play the game just to walk

around this area to forget where I am for a short while.

Life and art have major effects on one another and go hand in hand. Is art not used as a form of propaganda to push others to view the world in such a way which brings about change? On the flip side, does a culture's disposition not skew the subject matter depicted? In history classes we discuss movements such as the Enlightenment, Romanticism and the Renaissance which effect politics, art, and religion among other things. The difficult task then becomes determining who effects whom. The answer is not so clear cut, with the line between the two becoming blurred.

A prime example of this conundrum is Watch Dogs. Although the game will not be released until this upcoming November, the creators of the title have released the plot and a few videos showing game play. The setting is a not so farfetched near future in Chicago, Illinois. The city has become one of a few major cities to be fully connected by a supercomputer known as the ctOS, or Central Operating System. This supercomputer has access to almost every piece of technology within the city's boundaries. In addition to having access to all forms of technology the ctOS houses a database containing information on all of the cities' citizens and their activities. You play as protagonist Aiden Pearce. A former criminal type who suffers a family tragedy and is forced to rain down justice and confront a corrupt system. He is a brilliant hacker and aims to put those skills to good use by hacking into the ctOS to obtain any information needed, as well as being able to control all forms of public transportation, streetlights and omnipresent security cameras of all sorts.

This vision of a technologically centralized city may not be so far off as we believe. Already in Utah there is a facility operated by the NSA, known as the Utah Data Center, which houses a database full of domestic communication and personal data. The information which is mined includes your internet searches, emails, social media activity, media viewed, mobile phone apps and locations, text messages, health documents, travel records, financial information and facial recognition data from surveillance cameras to name a few. All of this type of information is accessible in Watch Dogs on the ctOS. The difference is in the game whole cities have these databases which are used to extract the information of their residents to be able to determine who is perceived to be a higher threat as well as who is a higher risk to be a victim. This just so happens to be the intent of the Utah Data Center, in determining based on their criteria whom may be a perceived threat.

My question to you is "Does art imitate life, or does life imitate art?" Perhaps a simpler question is whether the chicken or the egg came first. I see it as a little of both. On one hand art imitates life. Such as in Watch Dogs, the creators may have realized a path we are headed down and depicted what our society could resemble in a few short years. Still yet, life imitates art, for our society might very well view the world portrayed by the game as acceptable and may in some cases actually clamor for reality to mirror the depiction. In art, as in all things, with great power comes great responsibility.

Basketball Preseason Preview

By Bryton Curtis  September 30, 2013

Just a month into the school year, and the Fontbonne Men's Basketball team has already committed great amounts of time and sweat into this year's basketball season. At any time during the week you can catch the young men in the weight room pumping iron, or in the gym, working their game and their bodies to exhaustion, not to mention adding school to the mix. Between being a student and also being an athlete, sleep has become almost extinct. But according to Junior Sumner Ahearn, "It is all worth it." For these men, it is here in the preseason, where the players do the most to come together as a team while also getting ready for the tough season that lies ahead.

The Griffins did not lose very much from last year's team and starts off this new year with fourteen new faces. Young but talented, this group looks to continue in the right direction as a program with Head Coach Steve Schafer, in his third year, guiding the way. Schafer is extremely confident that this is a special team on his hands stating that, "This team works very hard because I have made clear my expectations for the team, and they listen, plus they know this is a year we, as a team, can make some noise in the conference." Although young, mostly freshmen and sophomores, Schafer also believes his players have great drive, attitude, and leadership- qualities his previous two teams did not possess consistently. But with that being said, it is a given that he whole heartedly believes this team can be in contention for the top spot in the St. Louis Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (SLIAC) but admits there is a long way to go.

The men of Fontbonne Basketball have never been a walk in the park to play against. Despite his win-loss record of the past two seasons, every opponent that has played against the Griffins has had to dig and scratch to earn victory. Toughness, great planning, and persistence against all odds has been a staple of Schafer's coaching style and that is noticeably reflected by the play on the court. But after a few years of being a head coach he has learned something that only comes with time, and that is patience. Schafer now sees the importance in patience, especially with a young core, in the development of a player, of a team, and of a program.

With that virtue added, the incremental steps matter just as much as the giant leaps. Every day that goes by brings improvement for the Griffins. From running the famous Art Hill in Forest Park in ninety-eight degree heat, to lifting weights together, to competing against each other in open gyms, this team is putting the work in. There are twenty-five players in the Fontbonne Men's basketball program but there are only twelve to fifteen varsity jerseys. That statistic alone makes the coaching staff eager for practices because they know every single player will be fighting for those varsity spots, making practices intense. With the talent combined with challenging practices and great coaching these men will be much stronger as a team, come late October when they face Division I, St. Louis University (SLU). SLU will most likely be ranked nationally in the top twenty-five.

Tough non-conference scheduling has also been a part of Schafer's approach. He believes these opponents will prepare his teams for their SLIAC conference race. The hard-hitting first half of the season features aforementioned SLU as well as Edgewood, Milwaukee School of Engineering, Elmhurst, and of course Fontbonne's neighbor Washington University St. Louis.

The season starts October 15th with the exhibition games against SLU October 31st. The first official practice hasn't begun and the coaches, the players, and the fans are all anxiously waiting for the first

“jump ball.”

Diversity: A look into the African American presence at Fontbonne

By Deanna Williams ↻ September 30, 2013

On October 24 1970, eight African American women, all students of Fontbonne College, chained the doors of the school's library for a sit-in to break the race barriers that were represented on campus. The students typed a fifteen page proposal titled the Black Manifesto, which demanded the following; black administrators such as faculty and staff, a black studies program, and an increase in black enrollment. Looking back on this important part of our history now 43 years later, Fontbonne still has a difficult time reaching out to the African American students.

As I drove down the street of Big Bend Boulevard there is a banner that says "Diversity," but as an African American student attending Fontbonne, [I wonder] does the word diversity honestly represent the Fontbonne community? In Fall 2011 there were a total of 587 African American full time and part time undergraduate students compared to the 1456 white students. Africans Americans represent 25 percent of Fontbonnes enrollment which is considered to be a good representation, but where is the African American voice and is their presence rich enough to be noticed on campus?

In 2012, I transferred to Fontbonne from St. Louis Community College-Forest Park which is a predominately African American college. Making the switch from a black college to a white University was a big change for me. I went from being in a classroom full of black students to being in classes where I was the only African American in the class. As a commuter student I was not aware of any African American organizations and I felt like an outsider that stepped outside my culture into a different world.

According to a study published in the National Communication Associations journal Communication Education, Jake Simmons said, "As a group, African American students wanted to assimilate into their respective universities, but at the same time they expressed a need to maintain cultural independence by segregating from them." Even though I decided to separate myself from going to a school more like my culture, I still want some identification and representation of my culture on campus.

I begin to look into the student organizations on campus; Student Enhancement for Cultural Awareness is the only organization on campus which has a significant number of African American students involved in the organization. The organization not only accepts black students but also other minorities on campus and encourages student involvement from other ethnicities as well. "There is a lack of financial support for minority organizations and would like to see more support financially to the organization," said Christina Finch, psychology major.

Finch also said, "I think Fontbonne does a great job with their appeal to the international students but I would like to see a greater appeal for the African American students. I would like to see more events and organizations that appeal to us such as African American studies program, black student balls or even a black student union, we just need more."

Yada Demisse, a black student athlete, described the African American presence in an intriguing way. "Personally, I feel its very little presence which mainly are athletes and you really don't feel it as you should or would on any other campus." Student Bryton Curtis who was on the basketball team for all

of his four years at Fontbonne said, “I feel Fontbonne only pushes to reach African American athletes, but they lack appealing to African Americans on campus [by] having more African American events and organizations.”

In that case, with such a large amount of African Americans on campus, is Fontbonne trying hard enough to reach this group of students? My answer to this question is no, because I strongly believe Fontbonne does not do enough for the African American students, or they unconsciously do not realize they are not doing enough. Fontbonne faculty and staff is very welcoming of my culture and I, but there needs to more of an appeal to us to make our presence known on campus. There needs to be a change.

High Performance Computers and an Unseen World

By Tyler Fernandez ↻ September 30, 2013

A friend writes, not too long ago I accompanied a friend, Alex Yorty, on a trip to a local St. Louis warehouse of wonder in the Promenade Plaza in Brentwood that put all of the other computer stores I have been in to shame. Microcenter, a computer warehouse store, is alive and wall to wall with an enormous selection of technology. The store was bustling with all kinds of types. Computer nerds, average Joes, fathers grimacing as they bought their daughters overpriced laptops for college that they will have no idea how to use. The store selection blew me away; laptops, desktops, software, computer accessories, gaming computers, keyboards, flashdrives, home security systems, a hole in the wall where you could pick out the parts you wanted in your laptop and they would submit the order (Way cool).

It seemed that Microcenter, while having remained completely off the map to me, was the cutting edge of technology. There was stuff in here that had not hit regular store shelves yet! What magical land had I stepped into? Let me give you an example; up until I went to Microcenter I had no idea where I could find the “mythical and elite” Alienware brand computers (a renowned high performance name in the computer gaming world) and here they were on the shelves in all their black and LED glowing glory! I was marveling Google’s latest creation, The Chromebook, (something I had only seen online) in the aisle dedicated just for netbooks, across from the aisle full of three hundred dollar gaming keyboards, when Alex grabbed my arm and dragged me towards the back of the store. “Come on, these gaming laptops aren’t the reason we are here.” We were on this trip for me. (I had recently fried my fairly new Asus Republic of Gamers limited edition gaming laptop).

“We are here for this...” Alex’s voice trailed off, half in awe and half for emphasis, as we rounded a corner in the back of the warehouse. We had stepped into the most important, and easily the most awesome, part of the store. (As if the store wasn’t impressive already.) The back of Microcenter is where one will find the things you would not at Best Buy or Apple. Microcenter is unique in the fact that it sells computer parts. Specifically, parts for desktop computers that are geared towards gaming and high performance.

My bottom jaw hit the floor. Everything was so sleek and shiny and it looked like it came straight out of a Sci Fi movie. I had known this stuff existed but I had never seen it in person and it had always been so removed from my life that it never seemed real. Buttons, LED lights, motion sensor keyboards, green, orange, pink, blue, cooling fans, giant electronic boxes with words on them I did not understand. I was going to enjoy myself. This was an adventure. Alex took in a deep breath and looked over at me. “Yeah I never get tired of that,” he said.

“I’m building you a computer! Follow me!” he commanded as he walked down one of the aisles with the type of swagger that one adorns when he knows what he is talking about. Alex, had done this before. He knew where he was and in a mixture of overexcitement and purpose he took me towards the very back of the store to a wall lined with what most people call “modems” (which I had already learned was a fallacy). “First you need a tower, then you gotta decide what to put in it,” Alex said. “Towers” are what computer enthusiast call the box which all the hardware goes in. Alex had built a computer a few months before I blew up my laptop. He had purchased a white tower that stood about

4 feet off the ground, was sleek and smooth, had very few buttons, icy blue LED lights that served as a trim, and a front swivel panel that hid the buttons and USB ports. When I saw it, I was impressed, but at the time I was less interested in the aesthetics of the computer than I was with the games we were going to play on it. “After you pick out a tower you’ll need a motherboard, and RAM, the power supply, graphics card. CPU I have and I’ll sell to you for 300, which is way less than the previous owner paid for it. I’m giving you a quad core i5, or the AMD equivalent of one, and the graphics card is a Radeon 4600. Runs Crysis 2 no problem.” Crysis 2 has long been known in the gaming community for being a product of the Cryengine and being the paragon for visual appeal and graphics quality for many years.

“My laptop had a NVIDIA 260M is this better?” I asked.

“Much,” Alex said sinisterly. I nodded in agreement, I was ready to shop, ready to create.

RAM, stands for Random-Access-Memory; basically, RAM is the available amount of memory in a computer measured by bytes. For example a computer with 16g of RAM contains sixteen thousands bytes of RAM which is four times the average. RAM processes information at an extremely high rate refreshing bytes at one thousand times per sec in order to reuse the memory to follow other commands. The purpose of RAM is to transfer information throughout the computer. In other words, the more RAM, the faster your computer will process information. CPUs, are the processors, or the central hub of the computer, it functions as the brain of the system. This is where the OS is configured, and where the commands originate. The motherboard is most commonly known as the thin green piece of plastic with intricate designs found in the center of the tower. Motherboards act as physical place holders and conduits for wires, the processor, and power supply.

Alex and I began our experiment. With Alex at the helm of this proverbial ship we steered our way through aisle after aisle examining brands and consulting each other along with other customers and employees as to what I wanted out of my computer. He was like a mad scientist gathering body parts for a reanimation attempt. As my arms piled with more and more items so did his enthusiasm and his level of joy. This was his supply house, his basement, his lab. After we had gathered the innards of the computer we made our back towards the towers. I had yet to find one that really astounded me. “What do you think, you see any you like?” Alex asked as he was examining a bigger tower than his own with a gleam in his eye that said “I want this.”

I looked back and forth up and down the aisle finding only blue and red LED lights in the towers. “I want green.” I said looking around. Alex scratched his beard. “Alright, they don’t carry green stuff, it’s not very popular. I’ll tell you what, lets go home and browse Newegg and see what we can find.” From that day forward my computer experiences have never been the same. I now have a high performance beast that serves me a greater purpose and has a strong attachment to me than some of my material possessions. And... it’s green.

Monsters University in the Meadow

By Amanda Teeter ↵ September 30, 2013



As freshmen, the subjects we study and theories we learn often come to us with a level of detachment from their actual value to the skills we hope to attain. College often seems to be another responsibility or obligation independent of the experiences we hope to have after school or as a direct means to an end without our full understanding of how this education plans to make us successful adults. I remember being a freshman and talking to my classmates, our conversations dense with rhetorical questions. “Why do I have to learn this?” “What does this have to do with anything?” “How is this relevant to what I want to do?”

In the much-anticipated prequel to our beloved childhood classic Monsters Inc, Mike and Sulley in their freshman year at Monsters University are each representations of the confusing circumstance of higher education. Mike knows that landing his dream job as a scarer at Monsters Incorporated requires a degree and education from MU, so he immerses himself in textbooks and learns the theory inside and out, completely neglecting his life outside of school. Sulley knows he has the skills it takes to be a scarer, so he slacks off in class, joins a fraternity, plays pranks on Fear Tech (a rival school,) and ignores his studies completely. Both students are quickly kicked out of the program and are forced to team up to try and reclaim their spots in the Scare School at MU.

The idea here is that Mike represents the education and theory without practiced skill, and Sulley represents raw talent without education. What they learn is that success in their education and careers is not about one or the other, but about balance and playing off of their respective strengths. In order compete in the Scare Games and earn their spots back in the scare school, Mike and Sulley join a fraternity called Oozma Kappa- a group of misfit monsters who were all denied entrance to the scare program. All of them seemed to lack the natural talent that someone like Sulley, with his vicious fangs and roar, was born with. The Oozma Kappa brothers were all awkward, nerdy, and just not scary.

Throughout the course of the film, however, the fraternity brothers all learn to use the theories that Mike studied so wholeheartedly to play off their own individual skills and become scarers. The film demonstrates how success in college is not about just learning enough to pass your classes, or about having a natural affinity for one subject, it’s about learning to apply the knowledge you collect in a way that compliments your own individual skill set. It’s no accident that Monsters University was released twelve years after Monsters Inc, and that those of us who rushed wide-eyed into the theater as children would be in college with Mike and Sulley all this time later. It’s somewhat comforting to see your beloved childhood characters go through conflicts that are comparable to what your life is like as a young adult. I highly recommend this movie to college students of all ages, but especially those of you who grew up with Mike and Sulley as I did. Monsters University will be playing in the

meadow this Friday night, October 4th at 8pm.

The Jason Aldean Concert Experience

By Corie Krisch ↵ September 30, 2013



Jason Aldean was one of many Country artists to be part of the Country Mega Ticket this summer. He was promoting his Night Train Tour. Jason Aldean came to the Verizon Wireless Amphitheater in Maryland Heights on September 20th , 2013. His tickets sold out in less than five minutes and I had the opportunity to go.

I did not know I even had a ticket until a few days before the concert. It was an early birthday present from my family. I was actually seeing my favorite country artist. Standing in the Mega Ticket line was unbelievable to me. After standing in line for a half hour my cousin and I were finally able to rush through the gates.

We found a spot in the lawn dead center of the stage. I went through crowds of people to get some drinks and a T-shirt before the opening acts. After ten minutes of looking through the lawn area I found my cousin and we relaxed on the blanket [before] the first opening act, Thomas Rhett. I thought his performance was pretty good. I did not know his music but he used the stage very well and the crowd was really into it. He got them to sing a long to the songs. Everyone around me was having a good time; a few people were already drunk. Thomas Rhett played for about an hour.

The next opening act was Jake Owen. The crowd around me was even more pumped up. I have heard of Jake Owen, but again was not familiar with his music. He played for about an hour and a half. It seemed that during his performance the audience doubled. There were at least over 5,000 people in the amphitheater. Everyone was even more excited to see Jason Aldean. I know I was.

After Jake Owen, there was DJ mixing different genres of music. One particular mix that caught my attention was Disturbed's "Prayer" mixed with a 50 cent song. I would say that was the only thing I did not like through out the whole experience. Jason was getting ready to get on stage and my heart is pounding. I will admit that when he came on stage I screamed incredibly loud and that was the start of losing my voice.

When he got on stage he welcomed everyone to his Night Train Tour, and also said that he was going

to be playing songs from his first album all the way to his current album. The crowd was excited and cheering. The first song he played was called "Crazy Town". The crowd was singing along right with all the songs he played. I can only imagine what he was feeling. Periodically he would make sure if the crowd was doing okay, especially those in the lawn seats. He showed that he really does care about his fans. Halfway through the show he performed, "Don't you wanna stay," the song he did with Kelly Clarkson. While he was performing it "Kelly Clarkson" came on stage and sang with him. It was a holographic projection of her, but it looked so real. At first I thought it was really her, but then my cousin pointed out the projection.

After that song, he introduced his band members and it was obvious that they are good friends. On stage they were joking around with each other and showing old pictures from the 70's and 80's. It was very entertaining and interesting to see what they used to look like. Near the end of the show, right before he sings "She's Country" he notices a girl in the pit with a sign. It was her 21st birthday and he got her a beer. It was great to see throughout the whole show how involved he was with his fans.

I am new to the Country music scene; usually I listen to rock music. I will say, though, that this concert was one of my favorites. I loved how Jason Aldean got the crowd involved and showed that he cares about all of us. One of my observations that I made at the concert is that he sounds exactly how he does on his albums. I respect that and I think other people do too.

Why You Should Think Twice About Using Your Fake ID

By Brooke Angel ↻ September 30, 2013

It's a Saturday night. The sun is just dipping below the horizon casting the perfect glow on your ivory skin. You have new shoes and a new haircut, so it only makes sense that you spend your Saturday night putting your fake ID to good use, right? Right.

Your parents warned you that a fake ID would lead to trouble, but you didn't believe them. Even though using a fake ID is punishable by law, they aren't worried about that—they're worried about who is in the bar with you. They said it's not safe to go to bar filled with older men when you just earned your right to vote. But you assure them you'll never leave your drink sitting down, you know your limits (five drinks and you're a stumbling mess), and you'll always use the buddy-system.

Then, you actually go to the bar.

Men between the ages of 25 and 30 see the sparkle of innocence in your eye. You stand out compared to the single 30-year-old woman with bleach blonde hair vying for their attention. These men tell you this; you've caught their eye from across the bar. What he doesn't know about the gleam in your eye is it's a little bit of fear, because you're three years away from being allowed into the place legally. It's also a hint of excitement because someone with years of experience is choosing you. But what he sees is an innocent girl. And it's been a really long time since he's been with anyone innocent.

But you're too smart to really play his games. You'll laugh at his jokes, flip your hair, and bat your well-mascaraed eyelashes at him, but it's not because you're interested in him. You want a free drink and then you want to leave. Haven't you heard the phrase coined by pretty-20-somethings, "Shot and run, bitches!"? You've tricked the creepy 30-year-old man into thinking you want to know more about him, but when he invites you back to his place as the bar is closing, you have to work early or your friend is staying is at your house so you can't leave without her. You leave the bar, unscathed, and didn't have to spend a dime. You win.

Your teasing ways have been working since you got your fake ID six months ago, so you're starting to feel comfortable in the bar. You are in control. Your parents were just being dramatic about date-rape and older men. That stuff doesn't happen...not to you, anyway. You're too smart for that.

Then you wake up and you don't know where you are.

You're naked and the man next to you is that creepy 30-year-old man. You realize you don't remember what bar you met him in, you don't remember deciding to leave, you don't remember getting to his house, and you definitely don't remember taking off your clothes. But you do remember you only had two drinks. Two drinks shouldn't make anyone blackout. So, what happened? Did someone put something in your drink?

You search for your clothes and tiptoe to the bathroom. You need to examine your body. Are you

bruised? Do you have scrapes? Are you sore? Or maybe he didn't need to be forceful because you were willing?

In Marianne Cassidy's article, *The Sex Education I Wish I Had*, she states, "...pressuring or manipulating someone into having sex with you is coercion...if someone is too drunk or high to speak in coherent sentences, walk in a straight line, stay awake, or take care of themselves, they are not able to consent and having sex with them anyway makes you a rapist."

But you worry people won't believe you.

Your parents were right.

It doesn't matter if you watch your drinks. It doesn't matter if you go out with a friend. It doesn't matter how safe you think you're being.

Someone else made a choice for you.

You know this didn't happen because you're only eighteen, but you wish you could have saved yourself for a few more years. Maybe you wouldn't feel so foolish if you would have been in the bar legally.

Your fake ID gave you a false sense of confidence and now it's wrecked.

Shatter your fake ID like the asshole shattered your feelings of safety and trust.

According to RAINN (Rape, Abuse and Incest, National Network), one in six women will experience rape or attempted rape in their lifetime. 44% of these attacks happen to women under the age of 18, while 80% are under the age of 30. In the United States, sexual assault happens every two minutes, but only 46% of the assaults get reported. And 97% of rapists will never spend a day in jail.

Approximately 2/3 of sexual assaults are committed by someone known to the victim and 38% of rapists are a friend or acquaintance. The U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Statistics 1997 Sex Offenses and Offenders Study 1997 found that the average age of a rapist is 31-years-old. And 1 in 3 rapes are committed by someone who is intoxicated.

Womenshealth.gov assures victims they "cannot 'ask for it' or cause it to happen," but many survivors of sexual assault report feeling fear, guilt, and shame.

Maybe the guilt and shame stem from websites displaying lists of ways to "avoid getting raped." These lists include suggestions like "be aware", "make sure your cellphone is always on you", and "trust your instincts." But a woman is never raped because her cellphone wasn't on her or she didn't look behind the corner before walking out of a store by herself or because she ignored the nervous butterflies fluttering in her abdomen. Women have a hard time understanding this when they've been violated. They read these lists and they think of all the ways they could have been more aware, increasing their feelings of guilt and shame.

What we need to realize is that people are raped because someone else made a choice to violate them emotionally and physically. To help the victims of sexual assault, maybe we could start issuing lists on how NOT to rape someone. For example, don't put drugs in someone's drink; if someone says no, it means no; yes is the only proper form of consent; and if someone is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, even if they willingly ingested them, they are not able to give legal consent.

With statistics like these, it is easy to view the bar as a terrifying place, but remember you are not alone.

If you or someone you know has been affected by sexual violence, it's not your fault. Help is available

24/7 through the National Sexual Assault Hotlines at 1-800.656.HOPE, and online at rainn.org.