

FIGLEAF

ISSUE #2, 2021



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By Jasper Pringle



Hi there, my name is Amelia Yoshida and I am the editor of Hunters Hill High School's student newspaper, the Figleaf.

The objective of the Figleaf is to create stories that entertain and educate the community of HHHS. We value equality, individuality and representation. Becoming the editor of the Figleaf had always been something I never thought I had the guts to do. This year, I finally found the courage to step outside of my comfort zone and try something new. As the editor, I'm extremely proud of what the Figleaf has become.

The Figleaf is a fantastic way to share your

interests, values and creativity with the school community.

That's why I urge you to step out of your comfort zone and try something new. Whether that be dying your hair a crazy colour or joining the debate team. It might seem intimidating and scary at first but honestly, you're never gonna know if you'll hate it or not unless you actually try it. I once saw the editor role as something that I wasn't suited for but of course, how would I have known that if I hadn't even tried it yet. So, my advice for this wintery season is to go for it! The only thing stopping you is yourself.

EDITOR'S LETTER

Race to the finish

In the first week of Term 2, we successfully held our 2021 Cross Country Carnival. **Lily Sarzentic** was at the finish line and got some of the winners' thoughts about the big race.

My opinion of the race itself... "It's fun, when you aren't feeling like you're dying." Lucas Manefield, winner of the 16-year-old Boys race

My thoughts on the set up of the track... "It was fun!" Will Coleman, winner of the 17+ Boys race

My advice to future racers... "Give everything a try. If you don't try, then you don't know." Mr Law, participant in the 17+ Boys race

My opinion of the race itself... "I enjoyed it!" Cilla Williams, winner of the 13-year-old Girls race



The highlight of my day was... "Getting to be the bear-y official Cross Country paw-tographer!" Hunter the HHHS Bear

Unpacking diet culture



Nina Schafer shines a spotlight on the dangers of diet culture. Trigger warning: This article contains sensitive information about disordered eating.

Since the early 1900s, dieting has become a normal practise throughout the world. Only now, people have finally begun to crack down on the ridiculous reality of diet culture and its effects on physical and mental health. So just how damaging is it?

95% of diets fail, and this just goes to show how unrealistic they are. Yet still, humanity forces ‘magic milkshakes’ down their throats and cuts out entire food groups for the sake of figure. Body types have been a

trend for centuries (who knows why), but it’s completely absurd to think changing the way you eat will completely transform you. The most that you get out of a diet is unneeded food guilt and malnourishment. The lies of ‘willpower’ and ‘holding back’ from ‘unsafe’ foods are simply a result of people denying their bodies of what they need. The cycle of restricting food groups or calories ingested leads to a potential cycle of bingeing and purging, which is when an individual ingests an abnormally large amount of food in one

sitting, feels guilty about it, and tries to expel the effects of the food by either forced vomiting or copious exercise. Is this supposed to be healthier than just listening to your body for what it needs when it needs it? Though avid dieters may avoid the truth, calories are really just a way of measuring energy, and the big stress about them was only introduced to make weight loss and vanity companies more money. The market wants us, the consumer, to feel bad about ourselves so that we buy their products.

Let's talk about different diets. For starters, intermittent fasting. This is fasting for long periods of time during the day before eating, supposedly cutting calories and therefore promoting weight loss. This diet claims to be healthy, but really it's just restrictive eating in disguise, which is a behaviour associated with and which can lead to anorexia.

Next is keto, a high fat, low carb diet. This diet is used to treat epilepsy in children, and is now highly popular among adults for weight loss, which isn't what it's meant to be for. Carbohydrates are the body's main source of energy, and without, individuals may experience constipation, lethargy and muscle cramps. This also makes it more difficult to get fibre, which is vital for long term health. Cutting out major food groups never leads to good, and these fad diets really just lead to insecurity surrounding food and body. Sure you shouldn't overeat processed sugar and saturated fats, but you shouldn't shun the natural fats and sugars present in complex carbs and plant based foods.

Completely trying to avoid processed foods isn't a healthy idea either though, because you should be able to enjoy food without feeling guilt.

For many women, the male gaze can be a big factor in their decision to join in on diets. Female fashion trends have been dictated for centuries by how they will appear to the heteronormative dating world, or 'courting' back in the day. Magazines and tabloid trash pick out 'flaws' in celebrities, which form the ideals in youngsters next to the coffee table and create unconscious ideals to the eyes of women everywhere that they are defined by cellulite and post pregnancy bodies- a perfectly normal part of life. No matter where we tread, diet culture pokes at us. But look at how 'perfection' changes in time. The 1920s, said streamlined and petite figures; 1950s praised hourglass, 2000s wanted muscles; 2010 says curves and if you go as far back as ancient Greece, trends scream CURVIER. This is why trends are essentially ridiculous and should be completely ignored. As long as your body can function like bodies are supposed to, there is no problem. Love yourself and go eat the last biscuit in the pack.

By Nina Schafer





"My BIG BREAK"

Zenep Erdogan shares how she learned to stop procrastinating and seize the chance to participate in a project with the National Institute of Dramatic Arts (NIDA).

At the end of 2020, my mother showed me a picture from the school facebook; an ad for the drama company, a collaborating project of both the ArtsUnit and National Institute of Dramatic Arts (NIDA). There was a three part audition, which entailed two written and filmed monologues and writing a one-page script.

I wasn't even sure how interested I was

in the drama company, but the audition sounded fun, so I figured I would give it a go. So I did. My two monologues included the phrases 'lung disease', 'is that a gun?', 'scam a few rich idiots' and 'no, Riley, that is not edible'. That sentence doesn't add much to the article, but it's important to me that you know that. Anyway, I wrote both monologues ahead of time, however, there is a reason I claim the title

‘master procrastinator’, as I completed my endorsement sheet and filmed both my monologues, submitting them the day of the deadline.

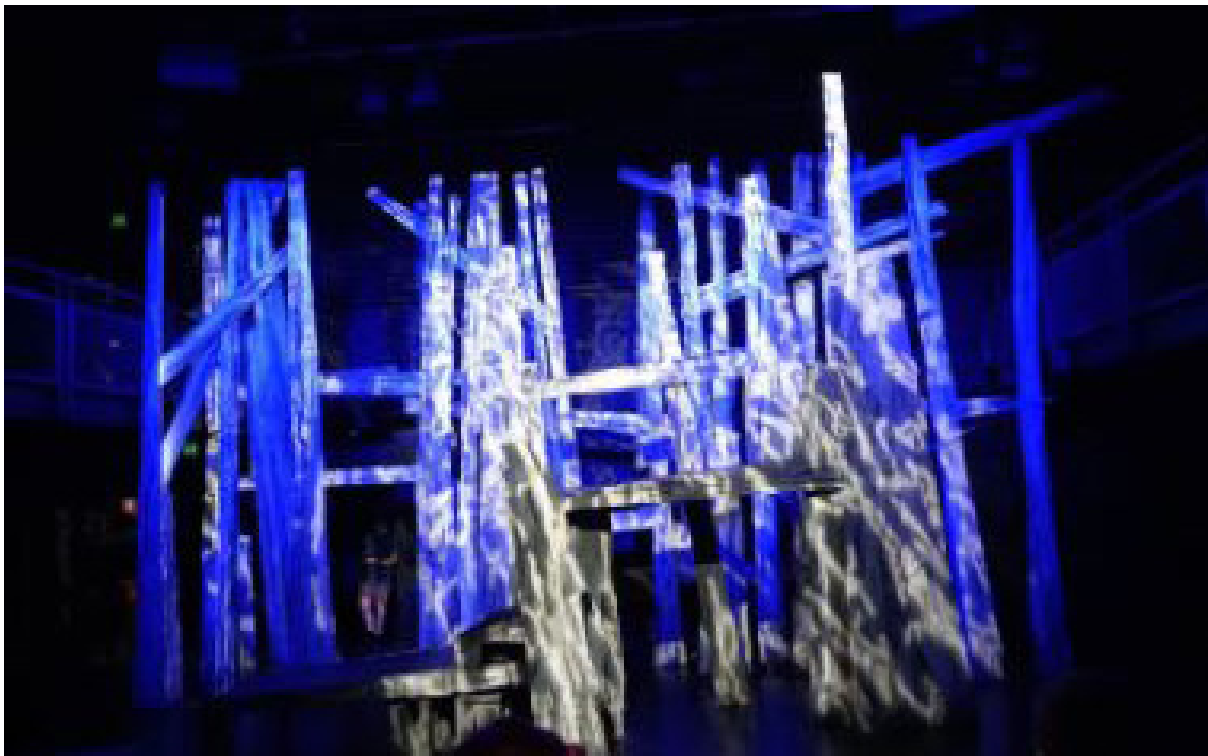
Somehow, I got in. We first began our process at Lewisham Public School. The play was completely original, so my team had to actually compose the entire thing. The target audience was 5 to 7 year olds, but with such great directors and fellow actors, it was easy to create our play, ‘Tales of the Wild Bush’.

We changed our location to NIDA afterwards, and wow, that was one large, intimidating building. We began working

with a set and costumes at the location. There, we even got our own dressing room, with a mirror and lights for each of us! In the end, we performed 8 shows over the course of 3 days. Our first show, cast interviews and the script will all be made publicly available by the end of 2021, and also be used as an educational resource.

This process; the audition, the writing, the acting, all of it, has been a magical experience, and I recommend that you audition for the company next year. I know that I certainly will.

By Zeynep Erdogan



TAKE TWO!



Fern Pulvirenti and Amelia Yoshida get the inside story on how (and why) Mr Kennedy and Mr Pickles switched from acting and banking to careers in the classroom.

Why would someone want to be a teacher? This question has been on our mind a lot. Last issue we began our investigation into this very question and the answers were varied. From family influence to good will, passion to creating a better future, we had a pretty solid lead into our

question. But we needed more evidence, and luckily we had a lot more teachers to pester.

In this issue, we continue our case study on the wonderful past careers of our teachers at this school. We begin with Mr Kennedy, the Big K, the school's own Hollywood star (basically), and his rise through the theatrical ranks to education.

What was your past career?

I was an actor, professionally, from 1995 to 2012.

What did you want to be when you were younger?

When I was 10 I wanted to be a cop, or whatever, because I had an action figure. When I was 15 I found bands and theatre. I either wanted to be a musician, rockstar, or a Hollywood star. Theatre in its nature is collaborative, you can never do it alone. You need at least an audience member.

I started with musicals, then when I went to university I did straight dramatic plays. After university I was picked up by a street-theatre company, Chrome, and did street-theatre for eight years. After that, my wife and I moved to America, and I did a lot of Shakespeare productions. I studied clown in Russia for six weeks

Why did you become a teacher?

I shouldn't say this as a teacher, but I was a terrible, terrible student. I failed my HSC. I only got into university because of my audition. But once I got into university, it really clicked. I was like ohh that's how you do research! I did lots of theatre education and also wrote a three hour clowning course. I wasn't finding theatre as exciting anymore so, get ready for it, here's the quote, I went from entertainment to edutainment. The transition to teaching from theatre was very gradual. But I enjoy education. Maybe that will change one day.

After interrogating Mr Kennedy. we continued our investigation with Mr Pickles. TAS teacher extraordinaire, who

gave us a short and sweet reply.

What was your past career?

First career was with WESTPAC the Bank on a cadetship. Second career was teaching in Western Australia. Third career was a partnership business in mortgage broker. Fourth Career was return to teaching

What did you want to be when you were younger?

Professional AFL Footballer. Own my own business

Why did you become a teacher?

The TAS teachers were the coolest teachers at my school. I won an HSC award for woodwork

The answer is clear to our question: Why Would Someone Want To Be A Teacher? It differs between peoples. Their own experiences influence their road to teaching, but it's pretty obvious most do it out of good will for creating a better environment for teenagers to grow up in.

By Fern Pulvirenti and Amelia Yoshida



LET'S TALK ABOUT PERIODS

Isabelle Baker shines a spotlight on period symptoms, products and solutions.



Common PMS (premenstrual syndrome) symptoms

- Cramps (pain in your lower abdomen, back or thighs)
- Bloating (when your stomach feels swollen)
- Breakouts (getting pimples)
- Sore or tender breasts (pain in your breasts or chest)
- Mood swings (when your emotions change quickly or you
- feel upset, angry or anxious)
- Feeling tired (or maybe I am just always tired...)

How long does a period last?

The menstrual (period) cycle is different for every woman although most women have periods that last between 3-5 days. A period lasting from anywhere for two to eight days is also considered to be normal. The average female gets her period around age 12 but you can get your first period between 10 and 15 years old. There is no right or wrong age for a female to get her period. It is completely normal to get your period earlier or later than others.

Which products can I use?

The go-to product for your first period or even your first year of periods is the pad. There are many different kinds of pads you can buy and it may take a few tries to figure out one you like and are comfortable with.

If you need some more advice, ask a female in your household or look online yourself if you're not comfortable talking about it. The second product you can use is a tampon. A tampon may seem a little more advanced and a bit scarier but it is just as easy to use. It is great for swimming and for sport while you're on your period.

When should I change products?

For pads, it's best to change them every 4 hours. However, if your period is quite heavy, changing it more frequently is best to keep up good hygiene and prevent any bad odors. This is especially good for playing sports at school to also prevent any accidental leaks. When you change, use the sanitary bins that are provided for you in the bathroom stalls. (I know that sometimes the bathrooms are quite dirty but we just need to

deal with it as best as possible.)

Now, for tampons, change them every 4-6 hours. It may be okay if you accidentally leave it longer but it's best not to because it can lead to infections or possibly TSS. TSS is toxic shock syndrome and it is the complication of certain types of bacterial infections. This may sound a little scary but luckily it is quite rare.

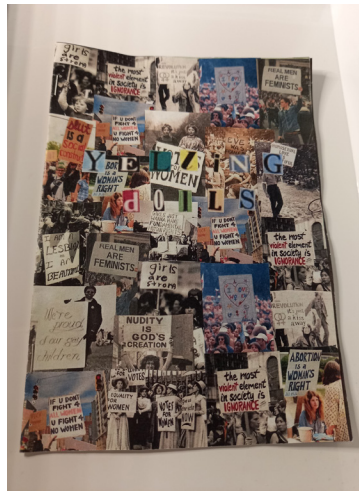
Now lastly, wearing pads or tampons at night! If you want to sleep through the night, wear pads. However, if you don't mind waking up every few hours, you can happily use tampons. Now just a heads up, leaks may occur during the night. Be prepared to wash any clothes or sheets when you wake up. You'll learn more as you go. Good luck!

By Isabelle Baker



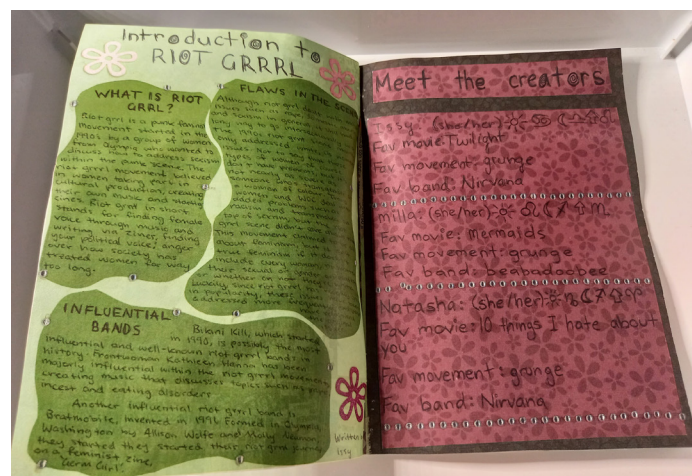
INSIDE YELLING DOLLS

Take a look at "Yelling Dolls"; the brainchild of four talented Year 10 students.



We are an independent feminist zine that focuses primarily on the Riot Grrrl movement from the 1990s. A zine is a mini-magazine that originated from sci-fi lovers, but it gained popularity in the '60s and '70s in the Punk scene to spread political messages. Our zine raises awareness on gender inequality issues as well as other relevant political problems. We hope to

influence people to recognise these matters and take action to help end or at least reduce inequality within society. Many people blindly follow these unequal ideas that society has ingrained into us, but Yelling Dolls aims to assist people in fighting against the system. Our zine consists of music, art and information on the movement and politics. **By Issy, Mila, Natasha and Cat**



Submissions wanted!

Have an amazing news article; opinion piece; story; poem or artwork you'd like to have printed in the "Figleaf"? Send submissions to Ms Lake at Rebecca.Lake5@det.nsw.edu.au. (Submissions can be printed anonymously.)

TREAT YOURSELF:



FOOD STYLING AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY FERN PULVIRENTI AND AMELIA YOSHIDA

Mini Rice Krispy Treats

Fern Pulvirenti and Amelia Yoshida share three delicious (and deliciously easy) ways to cook Mini Rice Krispy treats!

Tough day at school, champ? We've all been there. When you come home after a long, gruelling day at school sometimes all you want to do is stuff your face with sweets. Here's our favourite after school comfort food. Easy and sugary sweet, Rice Krispy treats send all your worries away and land you on a sugary cloud of bliss. Best of all you can make them any flavour you want! These are our personal favourites and how to make them! Treat Yourself, to Mini Rice Krispy treats.

THE CLASSIC

Ingredients:

1 packet of marshmallows
3 tablespoons of butter
6 cups rice bubbles

Directions:

1. In a saucepan melt the butter on low heat. Add the marshmallows and stir till well combined and melted.
2. Take the pot off the heat and add rice bubbles to the mixture. Stir until well coated.
3. Roll the Rice Krispies into spherical shapes and let them cool.

MOUTH-WATERING MINT KRISP

Ingredients:

1 packet of marshmallows
3 tablespoons of butter
6 cups rice bubbles
1 teaspoon mint extract
Half a block of white chocolate

Directions:

1. In a saucepan melt the butter on low heat. Add the marshmallows and stir till well combined and melted.
2. Add 1 teaspoon of mint extract and stir the mixture.
3. Take the pot off the heat and add rice bubbles to the mixture. Stir until well coated.
4. Roll the Rice Krispies into spherical shapes and let them cool.
5. Temper the white chocolate by double-boiling half of one block.
6. Dip the Rice Krispies into the chocolate.
7. Let cool on a cooling rack and enjoy!



HONEYBEE CRUNCH

Ingredients:

1 packet of marshmallows
3 tablespoons of butter
6 cups rice bubbles
1/4 cup cocoa powder
Half a block of milk chocolate
Honeycomb

Directions:

1. In a saucepan melt the butter on low heat. Add the marshmallows and stir till well

combined and melted.

2. Add 1/4 cup cocoa powder and stir into the melted marshmallows.

3. Take the pot off the heat and add rice bubbles to the mixture. Stir until well coated.

4. Roll the Rice Krispies into spherical shapes and let them cool

5. Temper the milk chocolate by double boiling half of one block.

6. Dip the Rice Krispies into the chocolate.

7. Crush up honeycomb pieces in a zip-lock bag and roll the Rice Krispies in the broken pieces.

8. Let cool on a cooling rack and enjoy!



CLASSIC GAME REVIEW: **BATMAN: ARKHAM SERIES**



Quinn Williams goes back to where it all began with this retrospective of the "Batman: Arkham" series.

For over a decade the "Batman: Arkham" series has been the go-to DC games for fans to play. Over the years, the games have been constantly adapting to fit the gaming market at the time. The first game "Batman: Arkham Asylum" (2009) was the first HD DC game to be popular and thus spawned an entire series. Later in 2011, "Gotham Knights" will release but will sadly not follow the Arkham story. So to honour my favourite DC game series this is a look back on "Arkham". This will feature some spoilers but this is the storyline of "Arkham". Unlike some games, all of the "Arkham" stories fit into one narrative without alternate worlds in play. However there was a prequel, "Arkham Origins", which is where we start our story:

Batman: Arkham Origins

The first "Arkham" game chronologically begins with Batman attempting to arrest Killercroc, a half crocodile member of his rogues gallery. This serves as the player's tutorial for gameplay. Once beaten the GCPD (Gotham City Police Department) swarm over Batman and Killercroc forcing the player (as Batman) to escape quickly. Once back at the Batcave, Alfred informs him that he is currently being hunted by the best hitmen money can buy. Batman learns that the person who paid them to kill him is Black Mask, another member of the rogues gallery. He is then shocked to learn that Black Mask has been killed in his apartment, but through some detective work he finds a new villain: "The Joker". After hunting down the people hunting him, he has a final standoff with the Joker

in a church sending him away to Arkham Asylum which links it to the next game in the series. A disgruntled Wayne Tech employee (who will eventually become the Riddler), Edward Nigma, creates a secret lab and gets private information about Gotham's high society threatening to expose all their secrets. He does this under the pseudonym "Enigma".

Between Batman: Arkham Origins and Batman: Arkham Asylum

In the time between each of these games, the Joker romances Dr. Harleen Quinzel who will eventually become his accomplice Harley Quinn. Additionally, Dr. Penelope Young experiments on the effects of venom eventually creating a new fluid: "TITAN"

Batman: Arkham Asylum

The second Batman game chronologically keeps Batman in the confines of Arkham Asylum after the Joker performed a coup, taking control of everything. As far as side plots, there aren't as many as the later games in the series. There are, however, some fun minigames featuring Scarecrow who puts the player in a nightmaric trance. After freeing some of the staff and defeating some other more minor characters, the player prepares to face off against Joker. When Batman wins he injects himself with an overdose of Titan, making him a giant Joker monster which is STILL defeated by Batman. This result in the Joker being in a critical state as his own blood kills him

Between Batman: Arkham Asylum and Batman: Arkham City

Foreseeing his imminent demise, Joker sends vials of his blood to people as blood donors to make them go crazy and become his successors. Hugo Strange gains funding for his project and plans to have his walls up by the following year

Batman: Arkham City

In this Batman outing, the player (as Bruce Wayne) wakes up inside a dark room in 'Arkham City'; an experiment by Dr. Hugo Strange allegedly to see how criminals would act when given their own city. In actuality Strange's goal is to covertly kill all who opposed him to gain more power. Once out of the loading bay for the criminals, Bruce suits up to locate Joker, knowing that he is up to no good. Joker gets the jump on him, injecting him with his blood in an attempt to get Batman to get the cure for him. This works and Batman sets off to find the liquid from a lazarus pit to save them both from imminent death. On his way, he finds out about mysterious "Protocol 10" and various criminals who are gaining followers and gangs such as Two Face, Penguin and of course, Joker (through the work of Harley Quinn). After confronting Dr. Strange, taking down several gangs and stopping numerous political assassinations, he finds the lazarus juice and even "befriends" Talia Al Ghul, the daughter of Ra's Al Ghul, who controls the lazarus pits. When he brings two vials of the fluid to Joker, Talia sees an opening and attempts to kill Joker. Sadly, however, this was a part of his plan as the "Joker" that they were seeing was actually an illusion of Clayface who immediately kills Talia and attempts to kill Batman,

who narrowly escapes. Finally confronting Joker, he drinks his and offers the other to Joker. But, he gets paranoid and slaps it out of Batman's hands. As the Joker realises his mistake, he tries to lick it up but realises it's futile as he dies in Batman's arms. The normally strong and silent Batman shares a moment in which he says, "You know what's really funny? Even after everything you done I was still going to help you." The Joker's reply? "That actually is pretty funny!" Throughout this, Edward Nigma finally takes on the name of the Riddler, leaving puzzles and riddles for Batman and holding people hostage until he manages to solve them.

Between Batman: Arkham City and Batman: Arkham Knight

Before the last "Arkham" game to date Scarecrow gets a new toxin in order; Joker's blood starts infecting and changing people and the Arkham Knight's army grows larger.

Batman: Arkham Knight

The last game in the Batman series opens on the horrifying sight of a dead Joker in a crematorium. By pressing the trigger button, we start the flames to signify the final death of Batman's main antagonist in the Arkham games. The main plot, however, follows Batman trying to take down Scarecrow who is unleashing his new toxin with the power to drive people insane. This is revealed to be funded by the Arkham Knight who is trying to show that Batman is ultimately weak. This is the first Arkham game to feature the Batmobile as a way to get around the city quickly.



The Arkham Knight kidnaps Oracle (AKA Barbara Gordon) and, after several long fights, the Joker takes control of Batman's brain. The Arkham Knight is revealed to be the presumed dead ex-Robin Jason Todd, who joins Batman and takes on the moniker Red Hood. In this game, there are a large number of side quests like one about Azrael, Man Bat and Firefly, but the main one is about the Riddler who has captured Catwoman and is making Batman solve riddles to free her. After the main missions are done, Batman enacts the Knightfall protocol which supposedly kills Batman and Bruce Wayne. Since there are no known sequels on the table the question of whether the caped crusader and his alter ego is still alive may remain unanswered.

Final thoughts

I really do like the "Arkham" games. They are interesting but also fun even if you don't like batman. The predator missions have high replayability and the designs all look close to the source material. If you want to play a Batman game you could do far worse than this series.

My rankings

1. For number one, I am (perhaps surprisingly) choosing Arkham Origins. I think that Arkham Origins has the best balance between simple plot but interesting game mechanics.
2. Number two is Arkham Asylum because of its originality.
3. Arkham Knight for the most interesting game mechanics but a lacklustre story.
4. Arkham City because I couldn't really understand a lot of what was going on.

9/10

By Quinn Williams

RESIDENT EVIL 8: A GENEROUS CRITIQUE



Sean Hughes faces off with the undead to bring you his brutally honest review of "Resident Evil 8".

Resident Evil" has been a very odd experience for me. It contains some of my favourite games, and some of my most hated. This new game is no exception, and to make this a challenge I will attempt to never mention the height of Lady Alcina Dimitrescu (pronounced dom-ee-tresc), the first of the four lords Ethan fights. Now, a quick plot synopsis of "Resident Evil 7". In "Resi 7", we play Ethan Winters, a bland character with a bland personality and a bland motive. Thing is, he was designed to be bland, so the player could project themselves onto him. Alas, it failed and whilst the game was good, Ethan's character was widely panned by both critics

and fans alike. (I digress, just keep that in mind.)

Anyways, Ethan is killed barely an hour in, but he is revived by the mutamycete (essentially a bunch of fungus). Then Ethan explores the main house being continually chased by Jack Baker, one of the deranged residents. An evil resident you could say. Ethan makes it outside, explores a bit, fights Jack's wife who has that thing (if you've played the game you'll know what I mean) and then solve some puzzles, fight Jack again and save Ethan's wife. There, those are basically the main, important events. Anyways, onto "Resident Evil 8".

So, "Resi 8" starts with Ethan in a house, a nice house. He's with his wife Mia from the last game, and now they have a little baby who they plan on traumatising with eastern European horror stories. It's all nice, Ethan tucks the baby in and then bam! Chris Redfield comes to continue on the Redfield bloodline by killing Ethan's wife with 3 hundred kajillion RAMRODs, the anti regenerating ammo from the dlc with Chris from last game. This is clearly a ploy to get Ethan to partner with Claire Redfield, as Chris can no longer continue the bloodline after his use of steroids sterilised him.

Ethan and his child are kidnapped and he wakes up to the transport truck, destroyed. Then, dazed and startled he wanders forward into the titular village of "Resident Evil 8" where he meets a man named Grigori. He seems in a panic and then he dies and stuff happens and it's all really boring.

Overall the initial village segment is rather bland, and presents the first issue with the game. With some exceptions, the game rarely feels scary, and that feels wrong considering how vulnerable you should feel as Ethan. If one approaches the game as one would with "Resi 4" then it'll feel better, a scary game sometimes, but mostly a fun story and shooter.

Now the second segment, the castle. Here we meet the main selling point of the game, Lady Dimitrescu, a vampiric 70-year-old lady who looks less than forty. Here is one of the more frightening areas as Dimitrescu will pursue Ethan throughout the castle, as will her three daughters who are made of bloody bees. Happily, this section also introduced the morbidly obese "Duke" who makes references back to "Resi 4", further proving that game served as an inspiration to this game. Duke is a fun lad and majorly helps Ethan progress various times throughout

the story.

Anyways, back to this section. It ends up being far shorter than many expected, especially given how important Dimitrescu was in the marketing, although I think we all know why that was. The section ends very quickly if you have a deadline to finish the game like I did, and it felt so brief compared to Heisenberg's factory for the manufacture of his famous 99%. This makes this segment very disappointing for me as I really expected more of this game, yet it still aims for "Resi"'s famous 10 hour playtime. The next section was still short, but it was my personal favourite.

House Beneviento is easily the scariest segment of the game. I've long said games shouldn't make you defenseless in horror, as to do so removes fear over the course of a whole game, but this section was of perfect length for this. Ethan arrives only to start seeing visions of Mia, Ethan's wife. Eventually, after a long trek through an overgrown garden, Ethan arrives at the house. Ethan enters likely after a bit of exploration to see a house just filled with dolls. (It's always bloody dolls.) If you play the game in an explorative fashion, you likely have a look around the house prior to going down to the basement, and all you'll find is more dolls.

Now Ethan heads down into the basement and down here it seems fine. Some bland corridors to explore, that's all, except it isn't. Anyways, as Ethan tries to pick this flask up the lights go off and Ethan has none of his weapons and a mannequin is now on a table in front of him. Now, this was pretty creepy as I have a major fear of those bloody mannequins. This section is pretty simple gameplay wise, you really just have to solve a few "puzzles" in the sense that one of those match the shape toys is a puzzle.

Anyways this little section with the lights on ends with some brilliant atmosphere

and scenery. Ethan enters down into a basement, a room made of stone to see a well, one straight out of *The Ring*. As he slowly climbs down the ladder anticipation builds, what's at the end here? What horrific thing is going to happen? And Ethan reaches the bottom and there's a key, one to turn the elevator back on, and as he climbs the ladder once more you hear the wails of a baby. Name one thing more terrifying than that.

Ethan returns to the room with the mannequin only to find it gone, with a trail of blood leading out. Follow the trail of blood and at the end is a bloody horrific baby monster that will kill Ethan in one hit. Honestly that's the most frightening part to me. I've always loathed losing any progress in a game, that's why I don't touch horror that often, but let's face it: "*Resident Evil*" ain't horror for the most part.

Anyways, the baby chases you a bit, and if you hide it just kind of disappears, disappointingly. Then you do this a bit longer, and honestly this baby thing has one of the most horrific monster designs I've seen in the series. It also sounds terrifying because the baby sounds are just slightly distorted to the point that they sound somewhat unnatural.

You finish the section and get to chase a doll around the house and it isn't scary anymore. This is one of the main issues with the game; it's far more of an action game than horror, in stark contrast to "*Resi 7*" which was absolutely terrifying. I predicted this ever since I saw Chris Redfield's steroid-ridden face pop back up at the end of 7. Capcom really needs to learn when to stop using old characters. The amazing things in "*Resident Evil*" have often surrounded characters unseen before, with exception to 4 which was in essence the perfect "*Resident Evil*" game as it did understand how camp the series was. I'll have time to rant about the downward turn later; time to move on.

Now this will be a far shorter segment than the last two because this is the worst

and shortest segment. It features Moreau, an idiot who somehow became a doctor and has an unsettling appearance. Now, I won't go much into the segment other than to say it's based around water and you can fall in. Moreau's boss fight is mainly him vomiting on you. Then you kill him and leave. I told you it'd be short.

Now we move into some better sections, the ones concerning Heisenberg of "*Breaking Bad*" fame. (Oh wait, wrong Heisenberg, this one can move metal.) Anyways, Heisenberg wants to have a chat with Ethan, and gives him a challenge, that being going through his stronghold filled with lycans. Now this is a basic section, it's mainly just constant action that for the most part you can run through. The real section here is after the stronghold, in Heisenberg's factory. Here, Ethan gets a face to face meeting with Heisenberg.

This was the point of the game I started getting excited. It felt like the developers would be giving the player a meaningful choice, unlike in "*Resi 7*", however. they just didn't give the player any choice. At this point, Ethan should be offered the chance actually join Heisenberg or go through the game as standard. Now, it does make sense that Ethan wouldn't side with Heisenberg considering he wants to weaponise Rose, Ethan's fungus child. Alas, the game offers no such choice and Ethan has to fight through the factory against the most dangerous enemies in the game. These enemies are mainly dangerous as they've been enhanced with metal bits and drills that make them look pretty silly. The only reason they're really dangerous is because they'll hide their weak spot which you think wouldn't be lit up but it is.

Ethan goes through the factory solving no actual puzzles, eventually meeting the legendary boulder puncher, Chris Redfield. Oh did I forget to mention the main villain? I wouldn't worry, she's actually the least interesting character in the game and isn't too important. Anyways, Chris attempts

to make Ethan continue the Redfield bloodline with Claire, yet Ethan is far too stubborn and loyal to Mia, so instead he goes and fights Heisenberg, now a mass of robot and biomass. Now, I don't think anyone will disagree when I say this is one of the cheesiest boss fights ever, as you pilot a mech that shoots rockets with a chainsaw arm against a robot man who references Chris Redfield's famous boulder punching and has massive glowing weak points. Yeah it's pretty absurd, and I think it's far too much. The game so far was trying to evoke the campy spirit of older games, and of course the feeling of "Resi 4", yet it honestly just creates an odd mish mash that comes across as forced. Anyways, onto the end.

Now is the major catharsis of the game. After so many trials and tribulations, low-damaging weapons and theoretically limited ammunition you get to play as Chris "Boulder Punching" Redfield after Ethan has his heart ripped out of his chest and dies. (Yeah he's dead, but hey now you can play as one of the worst characters of the series. Amazing.) Anyways, here you get a fully automatic weapon, grenades, and several ammunition stashes, and all the guns tear through Lycans at any difficulty. The main issue is how often you have to reload. Anyways this section is really just fun, because you feel powerful, mainly as a result of playing as a steroid ridden super agent.

Now there isn't much to speak of here until the end where Chris finds Mia and several documents, the contents of which I won't disclose in this critique as they are irrelevant and vital to the plot of the entire series. Anyways here Ethan comes back. Yeah turns out that he's functionally immortal to most things after getting offed at the beginning of 7, explaining how he can continually reattach his hands which have been removed several times. Here you get to fight the big bad Miranda who

ends up being a pushover. She was easily the simplest boss to beat in the game, and it was very disappointing as a final boss. After this fight, Ethan starts to calcify, the thing that's happened to every other fungus person in this game. Now here is the end of Ethan Winters' tragedy, where he gives his daughter to Chris who returns to Mia, leaving Ethan to sacrifice himself to get rid of the Megamycete, basically a big fungus baby thing. And thusly, the Tragedy of Ethan Winters comes to a climactic close.

Now that the summary is done, here's my opinion as a fan of "Resi". I think this game was amazing, but it wasn't what it should have been. 7 was a horror game through and through; this feels like a return to formula for the series, and we all remember where that formula led. Ever since they reintroduced Chris Redfield I knew the series could only get worse, and it has. "Resi 7" was great because it was unique compared to the rest of the series, 8 just feels like a direct attempt to redo 4, which whilst being the best "Resident Evil" game, was completely unique as well. This game ultimately feels a bit like a misstep, and based off of the epilogue video the series is going from downhill to an escalator straight to Hell. Eh, at least they can't mess up "Devil May Cry"... well hopefully they don't.

So, should you buy it? On a pure value basis, I have to say wait for a sale. This game is overpriced for the content it offers in a single playthrough, so wait for either a Steam sale or one of EB Games' big sales where someone will inevitably ask "Do you think a sale's going on?" to which no one will be amused. Well, that's it, maybe next time I'll get to show an interesting indie game instead of AAA tripe.

By Sean Hughes



ARTWORK BY



JASPER PRINGLE

WELCOME *home*



A dream-like tale by **Fern Pulvirenti** and **Amelia Yoshida**

Janie covered his ears with shaking hands, running away from the sound of laughter and torment. He didn't care where he was going or what would happen to him if they caught him, all he

knew was that he needed to leave urgently. His eyes fervently looked for a place of refuge. Capturing his attention was the forest that bordered the town. Without another thought, he felt his body sprinting into the

thick of the woodland. His gumboots splashed against the muddy puddles on the leafy foreground. Janie found himself running further and further, even after the sound of pain had left his ears. All at once, the world was tumbling around him and his body fell flat into the wet dirt ground with a thud.

His hands left his ears grasping onto the foliage around him. Blood began to run into his mouth from his nose. Letting the iron taste settle into his mouth, Janie clenched his eyes shut. Laying in the cold ground of the forest, he let himself sob into the quietness of the world around him. After a few minutes, his tired body had begun to shiver as heavy raindrops fell mercilessly from the sky gods above. Realising that his orange raincoat wouldn't be enough to save him from the rain, Janie slowly rose to his feet. Wiping his nose clean of the blood that rested above his upper lip with his orange sleeve. With dreary eyes Janie looked for refuge once again, but this time with the expectation that there would be none. He stood there, head downcast, letting the rain trail down his body. The rain showed no signs of stopping and the longer he stood there, the more pain he felt. The drops felt like they were hurling down like bullets firing down on him and him alone.

In the corner of his eye, a warm light reflected against a puddle on the ground.

Soon after a sweet melody began to play behind him and a faint smell of apple pie wafted through the air. Janie turned his head towards the direction of the light out of childish curiosity. A brightly lit cottage shone in the dark forest behind him. The curtains were drawn open and the building emitted a comforting feeling.

In an act of desperation, Janie ran towards the house grabbing onto the doorknob with his icy, wet hands. He looked at the wooden door in front of his face noticing a hand-carved sign. It read "a lost soul will always find home, and home is where the heart is." Janie let go of the doorknob. He raised his shaking hand to the door and tapped it three times before letting his hand fall down to his side. It hadn't taken long for the door to open its warm arms. A woman greeted him with a loving smile. She ushered him inside and closed the door behind him. A fireplace crackled in the warmly lit home and his shivering body gladly accepted the comforting feeling. Janie felt his body giving out on him, and once again he was tumbling downwards, but this time he was caught in a pleasant embrace. As his conscience let him drift off to sleep, a soft kiss met his wet hair and a few simple words led him to dreamland.

"Welcome home, Janie".

By Fern Pulvirenti and Amelia Yoshida

SLOW BURN



Zeynep Erdogan and **Krysta Smith** spirit you away into a world of magic... and murder.

Okay,” Onyx’s aunt began, a grimace already forming on her face. “Okay, so the good news is that your school is not pressing charges. The bad news is that you’re officially expelled, and need to transfer schools.”

Onyx blinked at her, disbelieving. “What? Why?”

“Well, you did burn down a 5-story building,” her aunt shrugged.

Onyx paused. That was true. But she was a second grader. Didn’t that mean they automatically got away with this stuff?

“But I saw this boy Matthew eat glue in class, and he didn’t get in trouble. If he’s allowed to get away with that, I think I

should be able to get away with this.”

Her aunt stared at her incredulously.

“Anyway. I didn’t even break any rules.”

“You used fire magic. I’m not going to ask you how you did that at this age, because I am mad at you.” After a moment’s thought, she added, “but remind me to ask you later.”

Onyx looked at her aunt as if the answer was obvious. “I didn’t use fire magic. I used a lighter.”

Their aunt gaped at them. “How did you get a lighter?”

Onyx shrugged. “It really wasn’t my fault. The teachers don’t lock the staffroom, and Mr Duracak keeps his bag there. He had a lighter in his bag for whatever reason? A pack of white sticks too, and those were filled with these-”

Onyx’s aunt interrupted her. “Okay, yeah, that’s enough. You never cease to amaze and terrify me.”

Her aunt walked away, and Onyx walked to her room to do 7 year old things.

A new student had started at Aster’s school. Onyx. They seemed ordinary enough. All Aster knew about them were some rumours, spread through the grade as if through a grapevine. Some were believable, like Onyx transferring because their family had moved. Some were not, like Onyx murdering everyone and burning down her school.

The teacher seemed glum with the addition to their class. Aster couldn’t blame her. Their class of twenty-seven was chaotic enough without anyone new.

“Onyx, there’s a spare seat next to Aster. Why don’t you go sit there?”

Aster looked up as Onyx crossed the room to her new seat.

“Would you like to introduce yourself, Onyx?” the teacher said with a smile. Onyx stayed seated, arms crossed.

“Not really, but thanks.” Her words were spoken in a monotone, polite but mocking.

Some giggles spread through the classroom. Onyx glared at them. The teacher would have too, had she not been too busy scowling at Onyx.

Their teacher was clearly not a fan of Onyx. Was it because she hadn’t introduced herself? Or was it because she really had killed everyone?

“What are you looking at?” Onyx sneered. Aster realised that while thinking, she had begun to stare at the new student.

What did she say? What was the right thing to say in this situation? “Uhh...” Aster started. Should she ask her how many people she’s killed? Should she tell her about the excursion their class had gone on to Imberia two weeks ago?

“I like your hair.” Aster said, surprising herself. She wasn’t going to say that, but it confused Onyx enough to allow Aster to quietly continue her work. The student appeared taken aback, their demeanour changing from cynical to confused and shy.

“What? Oh- I- Thanks? I guess?”

Aster didn’t look up from her work. Onyx did. A few times, actually, glancing at the girl every few minutes with varied expressions, ranging from suspicion to

admiration to intrigue.

Recess came at last. The class stampeded out of the room to enjoy their few minutes of freedom. Aster noticed that Onyx hung back, probably trying to avoid being crushed by the throng of students pushing past each other to get to the door.

"Onyx. Could you please stay behind?" the teacher asked. Aster watched as Onyx turned from the door and walked to the teacher's desk. After some internal debating, Aster decided to wait outside the room, listening in.

"Onyx," her teacher began, "I understand that things may have been different at your old school, you are part of our school now. It may be hard to adjust, but here it's important that you do as the teacher says. So next time I ask you to do anything, from quieting down to introducing yourself, please do so."

"Yeah, that's how things worked at my old school too. I think the whole 'submit to authority' thing is pretty standard for all schools."

The teacher ignored their remark. "So, if things worked the same at your old school,

you should know better."

"I'll listen to you," Onyx frowned, "when you say something of value."

Their teacher rolled her eyes. "This is why you were expelled, Onyx. You need to start listening, or you'll get nowhere in life." Onyx raised an eyebrow, slightly confused. "That's not why I was expelled."

"In your file it said you were expelled for misbehaviour. What else could that mean?"

Onyx paused, "That I may have, possibly, perhaps, feasibly... burned down a building?"

When Onyx exited the room, Aster asked, eyes large with fascination, "Did you really burn down a building?"

"No, why would you think that?" Onyx pointed an accusing finger at her. "Were you listening?"

"I wanted to know why you came to this school. It's a terrible school, by the way. Go ahead and burn this one, too. I'll help."

Onyx grinned, mischievous glint in her eyes. "Do you know where the staffroom is?"

By Zeynep Erdogan and Krysta Smith



Touch me Midas, immortalise my beauty in gold.
Cry for me when my voice turns cold.
When my outer shell hardens,
Tell me, how can my sins be pardoned?

Will you kneel before me when the gods decide
I am like them, I should stand by their side.
If the world befalls to tragedy
Will I be the one you see as “sanctuary”?

When the world revolves around me
Why should you stand free?
“Touch me Midas” is what they say
As their hope begins to fail and fray

A hopeless plea to set me free
My insecurities
Trapped by gold
Touch me Midas, stop my heart from growing cold.

A narcissist's lullaby

