



THE VIDEO GAME GENERATIONS NEWSLETTER

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Issue #26 – November 1, 2025

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Loading Screen

It's me, Chef Mike of the Virtual Gourmet Grading Network (the VGGN). Okay, no, just kidding. I'm not doing a persona this week. There *is* one *Persona* in this issue, but I'm getting ahead of myself here.

The theme this week is FOOD – all the yummy life-sustaining sustenance that plays a role in so many video games that it would be impossible to write about them all. Whether it's a collectible, a power-up or healing item, a puzzle element, or the entire point of the game, I've put together a list of some of the most memorable video game cuisine I've seen.



I've also slipped into full-on aging raging liberal mode in the first part of *The Final Stage* wrap-up. Maybe I'm being a bit unkind to a certain orange-faced presidential muppet, but honestly, I'm just tired of the constant clown show we're stuck with.

Recent Events

Amazon Fires a Staggering 14,000 People

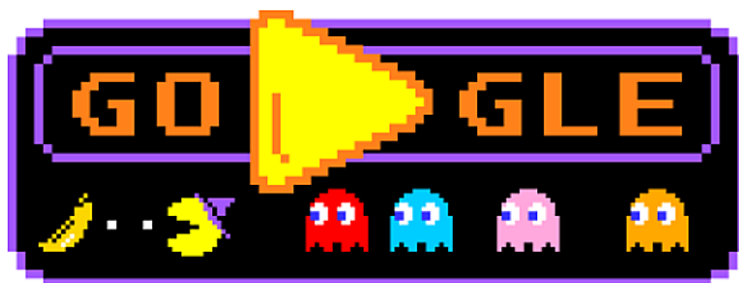
Somebody probably needs to explain this to me, because I don't get it. Companies rely on consumers, right? Consumers rely on having an income so they can be consumers, right? With so many companies "downsizing" on such a large scale, replacing people with AI – and this is only the latest example among many – how are people going to keep buying the things they sell?

This is only tangentially video game related, since the layoffs at Amazon affect multiple divisions. It does affect their gaming division, though, with the fate of some of their games and initiatives being in question now.

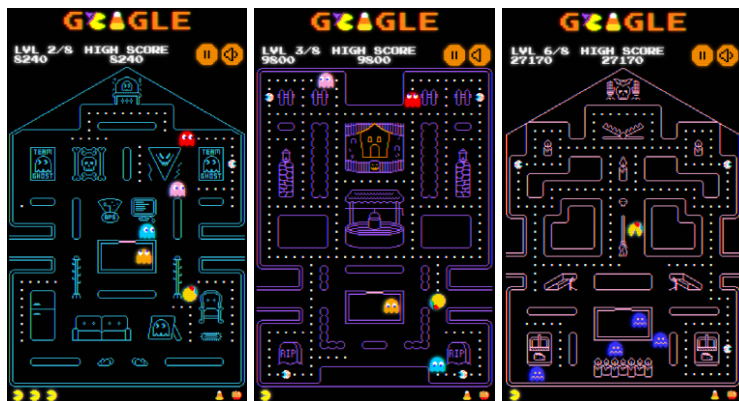
Source:

<https://www.cnbc.com/2025/10/28/amazon-layoffs-corporate-workers-ai.html>

Google Has a Halloween-Themed Pac-Man



Yes, Spooky Month is over, but as I write this, we're still one day away from Halloween. To celebrate, Google's home page banner is currently a customized Halloween-themed version of *Pac-Man*, playable in your browser.



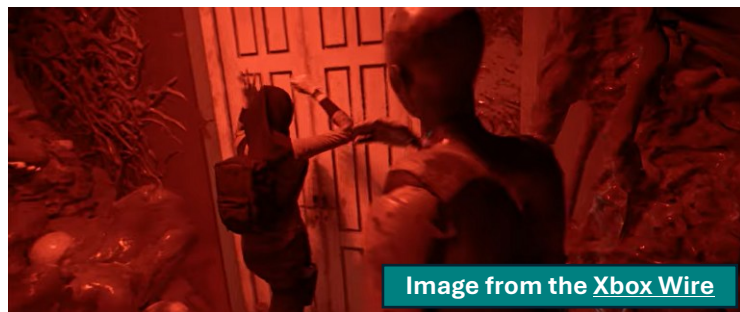
Source:

<https://searchplayground.google/pacman/halloween/?hl=en&gl=us>

October 2025 ID@Xbox Showcase

I missed this entirely. The hosts of the Kinda Funny Gamescast seemed to dislike the presentation itself, but just looking over the announcements at the Xbox Wire (blog), I see a lot to like from what was shown.

There's a survival horror game called *Agni: Village of Calamity*, which is in development from an Indonesian studio.



More was shown of Don't Nod's upcoming sci-fi adventure, *Aphelion*, which looks to have some survival and horror elements to it.

I somehow missed *Darkwood* in my horror games backlog last week. I'm only reminded of it now because the showcase featured an announcement trailer for the sequel.

Another horror game, *Don't Fret*, puts players in the role of a sentient guitar, somehow.

Yet another horror game, *Routine*, got a release date trailer. I've had my eye on this game, but it's coming out on December 4th. That happens to be the same day as *Metroid Prime 4: Beyond*. *Routine* will have to wait.

There's a deep dive documentary for the black and white vintage cartoon-looking first-person shooter *Mouse: P.I. For Hire*.

Extended gameplay for *Planet of Lana II* was shown. I haven't played the first one.

An RPG called *Ungodly* was revealed. It looks like something I'd enjoy, but I found out later that it's going to be free-to-play. Bummer.

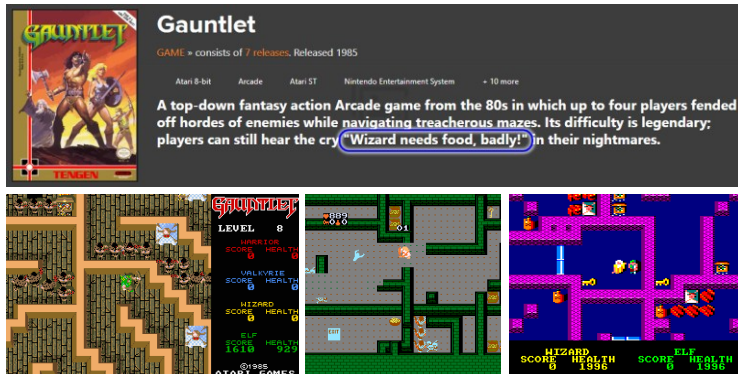
Source:

<https://news.xbox.com/en-us/2025/10/28/id-xbox-showcase-october-2025-everything-announced-recap/>

Feast Mode – Playing With Your Food

Everybody likes food, right?

At the very least, everybody *needs* food. This is especially true if you're a warrior, valkyrie, wizard, or elf, and you're low on health.



Video game developers have found plenty of ways to put food into their games, whether it's the entire point (*Cooking Mama*, *Overcooked*), a smaller part of a game not entirely about food and cooking (cooking mini-games, for example), or just as a collectible or a pick-up for healing the main character.

When I decided to write about food in video games, I wasn't thinking about that first type. I haven't played *Overcooked* or anything in the *Cooking Mama* series.

Food also tends to be a big part of survival games. My experience with them isn't non-existent, but it's very limited. I never played *Don't Starve*. I never even played *Minecraft*. Is there food in *Minecraft*?

Other food-focused games like *Venba* would fit here, but I haven't played it. As I tend to do, I want to focus on the games I *have* played.

It's a broad topic, but this week's feature is a look at the different ways food appears in a few video games I've played. Some of these examples are iconic. Others aren't, but they stood out to me at the time or simply fit the theme by showing the many ways that video games use food in creative ways.

For the purpose of this list, I'm not counting things that wouldn't traditionally be seen as food. That means no brains (*Stubbs the Zombie*), no blood (*Vampyr*) and certainly no entire human beings (*Maneater*; a fun shark RPG, if you're unfamiliar). I'm also crossing the various healing herbs (*Resident Evil*) and potions/elixirs (every RPG ever) off the list.

The list isn't ranked, numbered, or in any particular order. I'm just (chicken) winging it.

Yikes, sorry, that was a bad joke even by my low standards.

Castlevania (early 2D ones)

Wall Chicken



Imagine the confusion of a young gamer in the 1980s, whipping away at skeletons and bats, then accidentally smacking a wall and finding a large portion of life-giving meat hiding there.

Okay, maybe it wasn't *that* confusing, but it spawned a meme (or at least a trope). It's a hidden way to get hearts and heal, and at the time, we may not have questioned what the heck it was doing inside a wall, or if it was safe for Mr. Belmont to consume.

Games hide healing items everywhere now – in boxes, crates, or loot carried by the enemies you just defeated. It wasn't as common back when *Castlevania* was new.

Fallout (series)

Nuka Cola, Sugar Bombs, BlamCo Mac & Cheese, Cram, Dandy Boy Apples, etc.

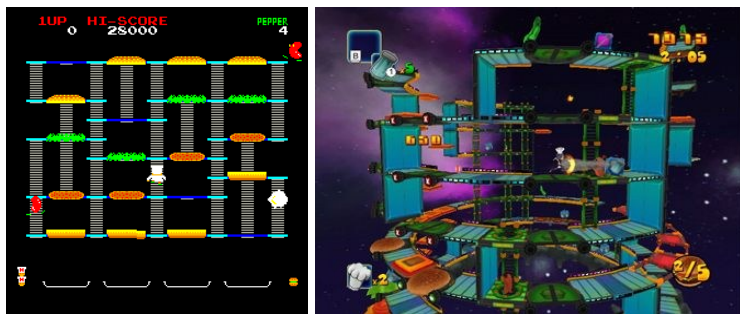


The wall chicken in *Castlevania* is bound to be a safer choice than the pre-war selection you can find in various *Fallout* wastelands. That stuff has been sitting around for a couple centuries. The preservatives they used must have been state of the art. They don't work as well as stimpaks, but they can heal in a pinch.

For the less adventurous, you can also obtain brahmin meat and milk (they're radioactive two-headed cows), Yao Guai meat (mutated bear things), Bloatfly meat (huge hideous bug things that fly), or Mutfruit (various forms of mutated fruit, often irradiated).

BurgerTime (series)

Cheeseburger Assembly



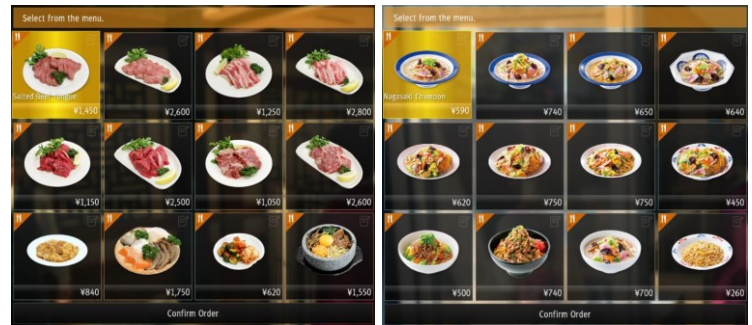
There have been a few iterations of the classic arcade game. My kids and I played a little of *BurgerTime World Tour* on Xbox 360 (Xbox Live Arcade). It also came to PS3 and Wii.

The game puts you in the shoes of chef Peter Pepper. While avoiding monsters, you have to climb ladders and walk over the various burger components to drop them and assemble the burgers at the bottom.

I never really got the hang of it. As arcade games go, it was never one of my favorites.

Yakuza / Like a Dragon (series)

Japanese and Western Cuisine



The talented folks at Ryu Ga Gotoku Studio (RGG Studio for short) must *really* like food. Every entry in this long-running series has various shops around the district (or districts) where you can sit down (sometimes with in-game friends) for a well-earned meal.



Convenience stores sell a few food items you can add to inventory for emergency healing, but the restaurants are where you'll find these realistic (and delicious) looking dishes. Well, I'm not a fan of sushi (I've never actually tried it, though; the thought of raw fish doesn't sit well with me) and my experience with other Japanese food is limited to a steak house visit or two, but I'm sure all of this is based on stuff people really do eat and enjoy.



Like a Dragon - Pirate Yakuza in Hawaii

Cooking Strange Yakuza Pirate Food



The latest *Yakuza* (*Like a Dragon*) spin-off has all the usual sit-down restaurants just like the main series, but it introduces a cooking mini-game too (the Goro Goro Kitchen) where Majima can choose ingredients (which you've collected as you play) to cook a variety of dishes for the tiger cub, his crew, and himself.

Final Fantasy XV

Food By Ignis



In this four-guy road trip, Ignis cooks food for the group from ingredients and recipes that have been gathered and learned. As with the food in the *Like a Dragon* (or *Yakuza*) games, most of it doesn't appeal to me and my more pedestrian tastes, but it sure *looks* realistic. There are a few dishes I might be willing to try.

Zelda - Tears of the Kingdom

Bouncing Skillet Meals



I don't remember how cooking worked in *Breath of the Wild*, but it may have been about the same. As Link, you select up to five of your ingredients from inventory to "hold", toss them into a pan over a fire, and wait a moment as the pan and the ingredients bob around to a short tune.

Usually, this succeeds, and you earn a meal with some number of hearts assigned - the amount you'll heal by eating it later. Some meals have additional effects, such as adding cold and heat resistance or restoring stamina, depending on the ingredients used.

It's fun to experiment by mixing random ingredients (meat, fish, fruit, vegetables, herbs, grains, rice, milk, and so forth), with most of it producing something edible from the 228 possible recipes.

If you experimented by mixing monster parts in with other stuff, you often get the dreaded "failure" sound and "Dubious Food" instead. It can still heal Link a little, but the ingredients could have been put to better use.

Each meal is added to a recipe compendium for later review, but I usually just experimented.



Scooby-Doo and the Cyber Chase

Scooby Snax



These next two are a bit of a cheat. They're based on non-game franchises, but they're both deserving of a mention.

In *Scooby-Doo and the Cyber Chase* (and presumably in every *Scooby-Doo* game ever, else what are the developers even doing), you can collect Scooby Snax scattered around each level. First, though, Velma has to convince the cowardly duo to enter the game world by bribing them with not one, not two, but a whole box of Scooby Snax.

As a kid, I never knew if these were dog treats that Shaggy just happened to like, or if they were some sort of cookie or cracker that Scooby also liked.

Popeye

Cans of Spinach



There's a charm to the *Donkey Kong*-like arcade game *Popeye*, but the 3D reimagining it got for Switch and PS4 is one of the worst games I've ever played. My confused mini-review is included later in this issue.

Split Fiction

Playable Hot Dogs



I hesitated to spoil the end of this level, since the game only came out a few months ago, but this is too good to omit.

After a farmyard romp as two pigs, Zoe and Mio fall into a grinder, become wieners, and must then cook themselves, add condiments, and jump into hot dog buns to finish the level.

Portal

The Cake is a Lie... Or is it?



GLaDOS, the manipulative ever-present AI in this first-person physics puzzle game that spawned a whole genre (see my top 25 favorite *Portal*-likes in [issue #12](#)) promises that there's cake to be had at the end of the mind-bending gauntlet of tests, before she attempts to dispose of you (Chell) partway through the game.

A prior test subject, apparently wise to the scam, scrawled "the cake is a lie" a few times on a hidden wall outside the testing course. Just before the credits start, though... what's that? It sure looks like a cake.

On a different topic, *Portal*'s ending song "Still Alive" is a classic. The one for *Portal 2* is great as well, but nothing beats the original.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=58oTEo8SoPk&t=9m14s>

Death Stranding and DS2

Cryptobiotes

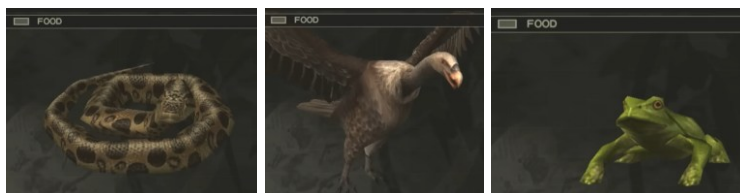


I kept reading this as “crypto-babies” when I played the sequel earlier this year. These are little chunky grubworm-like bugs that float in the air, providing a quick snack for protagonist Sam Porter Bridges (Norman Reedus).

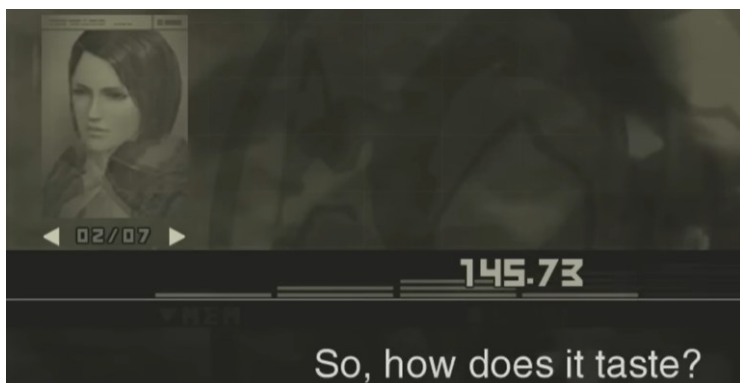
Technically, that makes them food, right?

Metal Gear Solid 3 – Snake Eater

All Sorts of Flora and Fauna

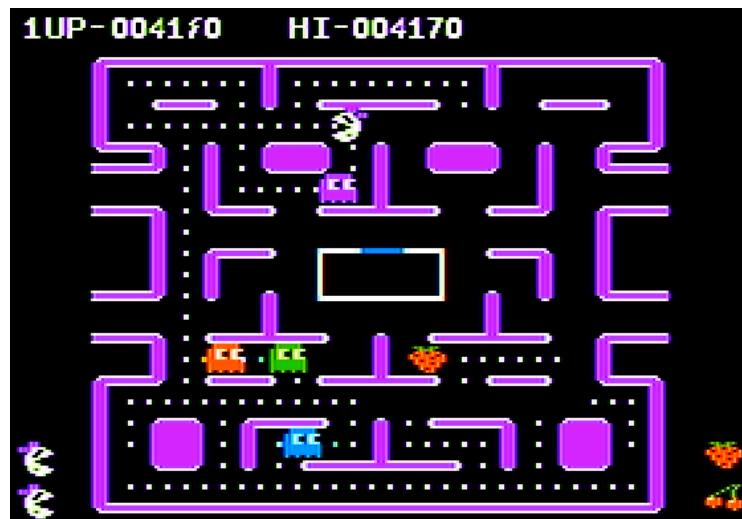
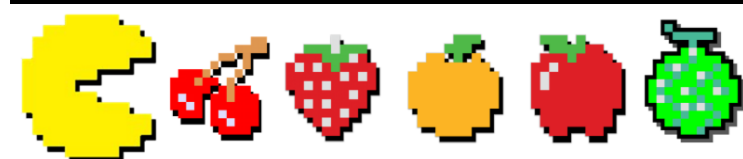


On the topic of Hideo Kojima games, nobody gets the most out of the local flora and fauna like Naked Snake. It isn't just snakes he can capture and eat. Throughout the game, there are rabbits, birds, frogs, goats, bats, fish, fruit, mushrooms, scorpions, and more mundane pick-ups like ration packs and noodles.



Pac-Man and Ms. Pac-Man

Fruit



Fruit appears as bonus items after *Pac-Man* or *Ms. Pac-Man* eats some number of dots. I was usually too slow to get them in time.

Apparently, a *Galaxian* starship, a bell, and a key can also appear. I don't remember ever seeing those. I never could make it that far.

Super Mario Bros. (series)

Mushrooms



As long as we're looking at the classics, few food-based power-ups are more iconic than the mushrooms in *Super Mario Bros.* They're in the Mushroom Kingdom, after all.

The standard mushroom is what puts the “super” in Super Mario, making him instantly grow and gain the ability to smash blocks.

Persona 4

Mystery Food X



One of the funniest moments in *Persona 4* and the *Persona 4* anime both is when the girls cook a meal of curry for the boys.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L5j_sMhyRsM
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XezqecUSpRs>

They find it to be... well, far from edible.

Crash Bandicoot (series)

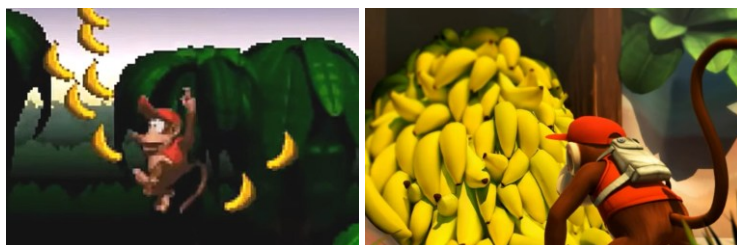
Wumpa Fruit



It's red on top, yellow/orange in the middle, and green on bottom, and this platforming mascot can't get enough of them. Collecting 100 of them grants an extra life, the same way it works in *Super Mario Bros.* with coins.

Donkey Kong Country (series)

Bananas



Bananas serve the same purpose in the *Donkey Kong Country* series. They're found everywhere and grant an extra life per 100.

Little Nightmares

Sausages



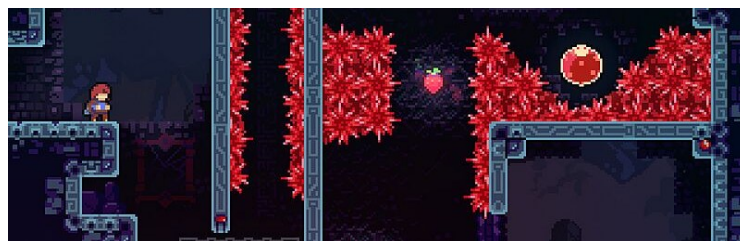
One of the most disturbingly memorable parts of the original *Little Nightmares* is near the end, when the main character (Six) grabs and eats a little gnome (called a "nome") instead of the sausage he offers to her.

On its own, this scene stands out, but in the context of what happens in *Secrets of the Maw* (an excellent expansion), it becomes one of the game's saddest moments too.

Sausages appear elsewhere in the game and are even used in one puzzle sequence to create a sort of swinging vine that Six uses.

Celeste

Strawberries



Unlike Bananas in *Donkey Kong Country* or Wumpa Fruit in *Crash Bandicoot*, the many strawberries in *Celeste* aren't just scattered around the level for easy collecting. Each one is placed with a purpose, usually hidden off the critical path, serving simply as a reward for the tough platforming challenge required to reach and obtain them.

The Elder Scrolls U - Skyrim

Sweetrolls and Cheese Wheels



This massive genre-refining RPG has plenty of food, but two items in particular stand out for me, for different reasons.

Everybody who played the game remembers the meme-tastic line spoken by nearly every city guard far too often:

“I used to be an adventurer like you, then I took an arrow in the knee.”

Almost as iconic, though is this other overused line of dialogue from the guards:

“Let me guess... someone stole your sweetroll?”

For whatever reason, cheese wheels became a favorite thing to hoard for players looking for something different and goofy to do after dozens or hundreds of hours. Whether it was spawning thousands of them using a mod, or just collecting every one encountered in the game and filling a room with them, cheese wheels had their moment in *Skyrim*.

I learned today that there exists an official *The Elder Scrolls* cookbook; two volumes, in fact. There’s also a seemingly unofficial cookbook specifically for *Skyrim*. There also exists an official *Fallout* cookbook. I wonder what they use in place of Yao Guai meat?



Resident Evil 4 and 5

Eggs



Leon Kennedy (in *RE4*) and Chris Redfield (in *RE5*) can collect white, brown, or rare golden eggs, which can be eaten to restore health, sold to the merchant for money (in *RE4*) and thrown at enemies like a grenade. Find out all about these eggs in [this explainer video](#).

Grand Theft Auto - San Andreas

Chicken, Burgers, and Pizza



I was on a PS2-era GTA run for a while in 2022. I played through *GTA III* and *Vice City* (the often criticized “definitive editions”). I started *San Andreas*, then got stuck on a mission. I picked it up months later and pushed through, then got stuck on another mission where you’re going through a motel with cops popping out of every hallway and room.

I did this off and on for weeks and finally pushed through that one as well. Maybe I should have abandoned the mission and gone to stock up on better guns, but I didn’t.

After that, I just kind of never went back.

One thing struck me as inventive, though, especially for the time. My CJ had put on a few extra pounds from the chicken, burgers, and maybe pizza I was buying on a regular basis.

You’re supposed to exercise or do something to get back in shape. It was clever, but a little too “sim” for me to really appreciate it.

Bugsnax

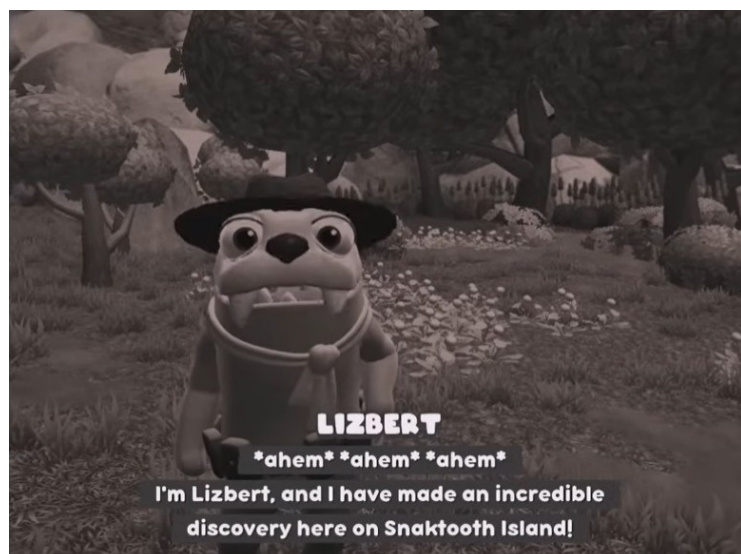
Delicious Critters



Arguably the most important and deserving entry on this list, *Bugsnax* earned the rating of 100% Totally Bonkers Weird when I wrote about weird games back in [issue #14](#). My mini-review appears in that same issue.

This was a digital-only launch title for the PlayStation 5, and it debuted on PlayStation Plus, included with the subscription. I think that was before PS+ became a complicated three-tier system.

The game takes place on Snaktooth Island, where the Australian-accented explorer Lizbert Megafig goes missing after making the discovery of a lifetime. The island is home to a large variety of *Bugsnax* – half bug, half snack, and apparently all delicious – which say their own name and can be captured Pokémon-style. Unlike Pokémon, they're also edible (hence the “snax” part of their name).



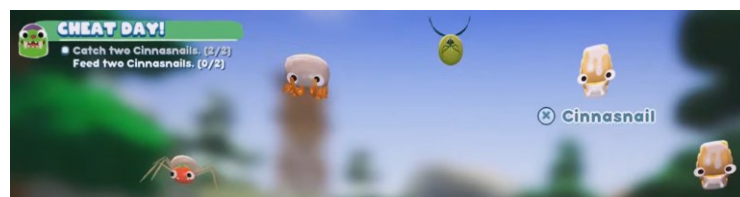
You play as a journalist who specializes in cryptid research. You travel to the island (and end up marooned there) after receiving the video from Lizbert.

Gameplay involves exploring the island, catching *Bugsnax* with a variety of gadgets and traps, and helping several muppet-like settlers with tasks and quests.



The lighthearted and at times heartwarming story takes a sinister turn near the end, but I'll say no more about that.

The funny thing about *Bugsnax* is that eating them changes some body part *into* them, for a time. NPCs may end up with fruit for legs, hot dog hands, French fry arms, or cinnamon roll feet. You choose what to feed them and which body part to transform.



This is a game about food (and a lot more), yet it's not a cooking game, not a crafting game, and not a survival game. I've never played anything quite like *Bugsnax*, before or since.

Collection Inspection – Retro Classics

This week, I could have included my PS1 copy of *Scooby-Doo and the Cyber Chase*, or the three *Scooby-Doo* games on the original Xbox, or my PS2 copy of *Metal Gear Solid 3*, or my box set of the *Metal Gear Solid Essential Collection* (also on PS2), or my collector's edition of *Fallout: New Vegas* on Xbox 360, or *San Andreas*, or any of the *Crash Bandicoot* games (I have them all), or *Persona 4* on PS2 or Vita, or... well, really any game I mentioned in the main feature (aside from digital-only ones) or any game related to them.

I let things spiral out of control when I started this with zombie games back in [issue #22](#), so I've tried to trim things down to just a few games. This week, that means a few classic cartridges and a small self-contained game.

As always, my full collection is at the link below, in case anybody reading this would like to see a particular game. I don't know why you would, unless you also collect and are trying to confirm something about a specific game.

<https://www.prowler-pro.com/inventory/videogames.htm>

Namco Ms. Pac-Man Stand-Alone Game

Platform: Arcade / **Edition:** N/A

Comments: I don't really collect hardware (just the consoles I need for playing stuff), but I got this little guy as a birthday gift years ago. It uses an outdated TV composite connection, but comes with *Ms. Pac-Man*, *Pole Position*, *Galaga*, *Xevious*, and *Mappy*.



Gauntlet

Platform: NES / **Edition:** Unlicensed

Comments: Tengen (aka Atari) released several unlicensed black cartridge games for the NES after an unresolved dispute with Nintendo. Before they went rogue, the same version of *Gauntlet* was sold as an officially licensed gray cartridge too.



Castlevania

Platform: NES / **Edition:** Standard

Comments: Here's a classic. The music in this series holds up, too. I started re-gathering NES games after selling mine before I started "seriously" collecting, so I've been getting them with no boxes or manuals now.



Castlevania II – Simon's Quest

Platform: NES / **Edition:** N/A

Comments: This is the only one I tried to play back then, partly because of that silly *Captain N.* cartoon.



Castlevania III – Dracula's Curse

Platform: NES / **Edition:** Standard

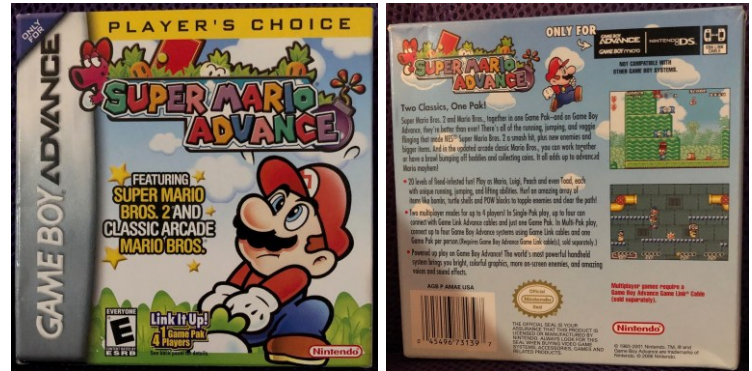
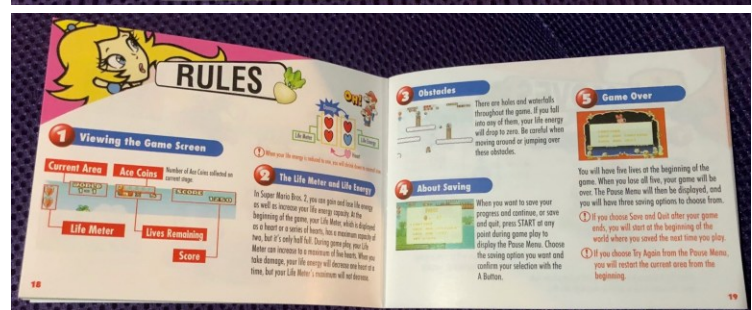
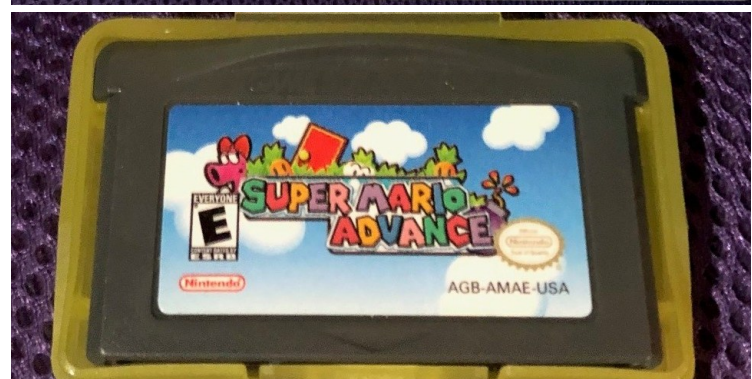
Comments: Generally considered the best of the 3.



Super Mario Advance

Platform: GBA / **Edition:** Player's Choice

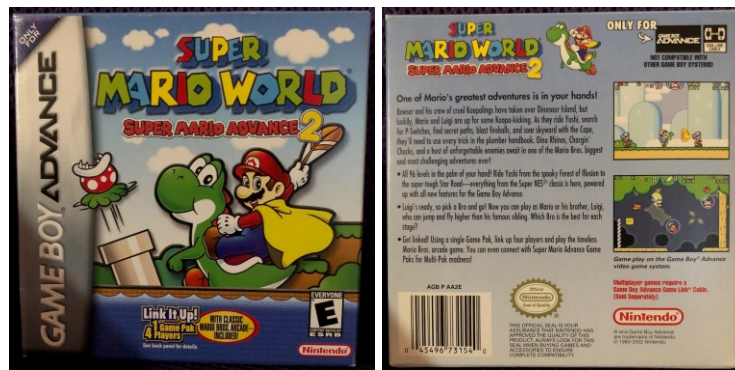
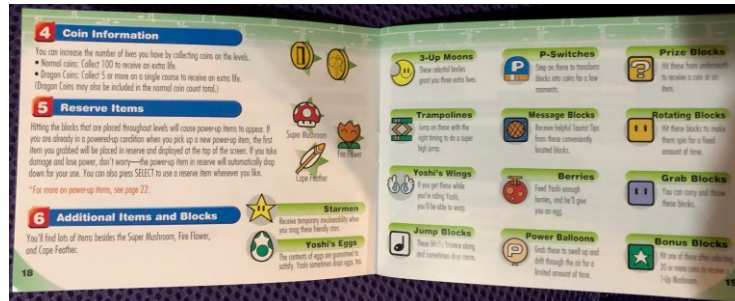
Comments: The naming system for these on GBA was so weird. This one is really *Super Mario Bros. 2*.



Super Mario Advance 2: Super Mario World

Platform: GBA / Edition: Standard

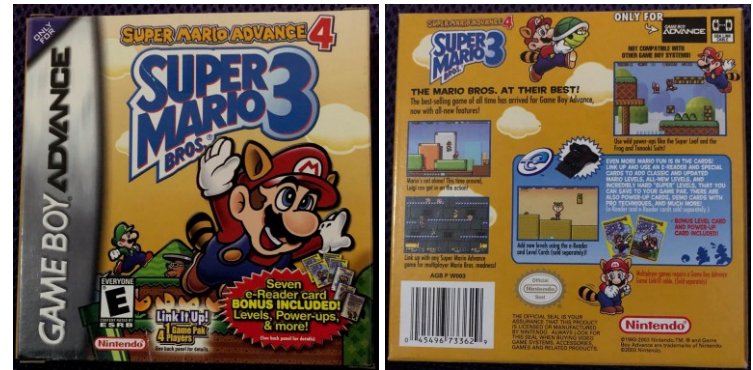
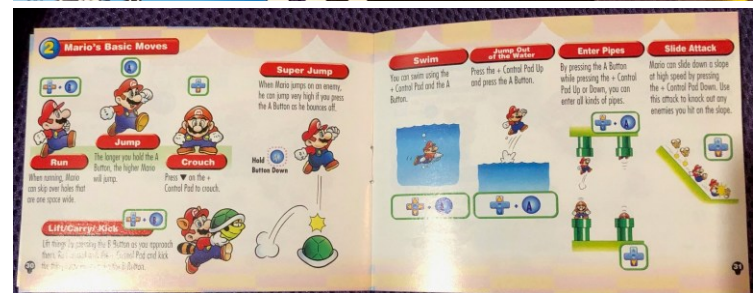
Comments: At least they added the real name too. It also comes with a small double-sided map/poster.



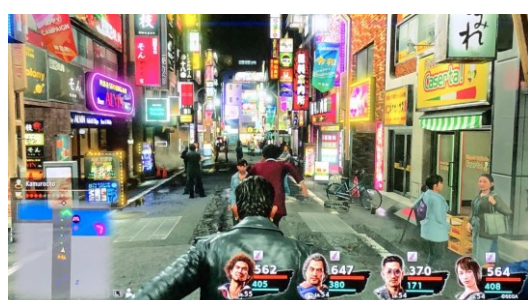
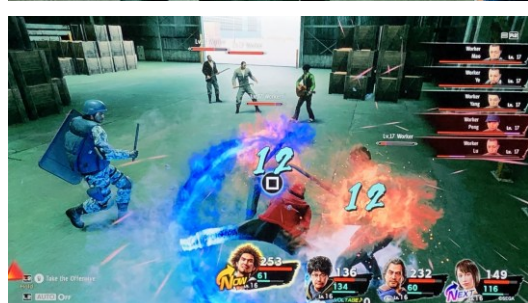
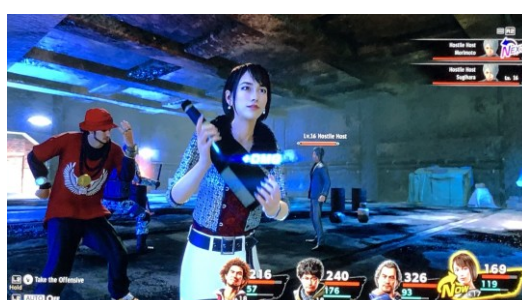
Super Mario Advance 4: Super Mario Bros. 3

Platform: GBA / Edition: Standard

Comments: Here's Super Mario Bros. 3. I also have Super Mario Advance 3: Super Mario World 2: Yoshi's Island but they didn't put "Super Mario World 2" on it.



Mini-Review: Yakuza – Like a Dragon



I can't add much to the praise this game already gets, but if you've already heard it's great, you heard right.

Aside from *Judgment*, it's my first *Yakuza* game. This one features over-the-top turn-based combat that's kind of a by-product of main character Ichiban Kasuga's love of *Dragon Quest* and his active imagination.

The story is really good.

There's plenty to get distracted with too – a staple of the series, I think: lots of mini-games; plenty of side quests that offer up fun, surprising self-contained mini-stories; an addictive business management sim; kart racing; loot everywhere; the list goes on.

The characters are great, and there's English voice acting this time. If I clear two post-game dungeons, I could get the platinum.

It's so much fun, that I just might. I loved it!

Played on console: PS5
Originally posted: 04/10/2021.

Mini-Review: Yakuza Zero



It's not the first released in the series, but it's the first chronologically, making it a good starting point.

I've played *Like a Dragon* (aka *Yakuza 7*) and both *Judgment* games, but never an entry in the original series until now.

What a great game.

Although it's very familiar in many ways (does Ryu Ga Gotoku just keep making the same game over and over?) it's the story that makes it stand out for me. Even the side quests offer fun, surprising moments.

Plenty of mini-games could keep a person busy for dozens of hours alone, and I got pretty invested in the lengthy cabaret club quest line.

The only negative for me is the lack of an English dub; something I've been spoiled on by RGG's more recent games. But wow, is this good. Highly recommended.

I only hope I find time to make my way through the rest of them.

PS4 game played on PS5
Originally posted: 07/24/2023.

Mini-Review: Yakuza Kiwami



A remake of the game that started the *Yakuza* (now *Like a Dragon*) series.

I never played the original despite owning it on PS2, but from what I've read, this is expanded and improved in many ways.

It's close in style to *Yakuza Zero* (which I also played recently for the first time), yet it's not quite as impressive. In particular, the substories were mostly short and uninteresting, in contrast to *Zero* where side quests were fun, surprising, and varied.

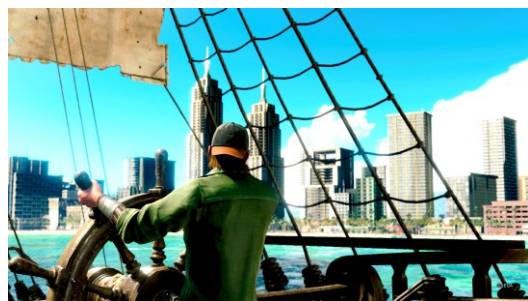
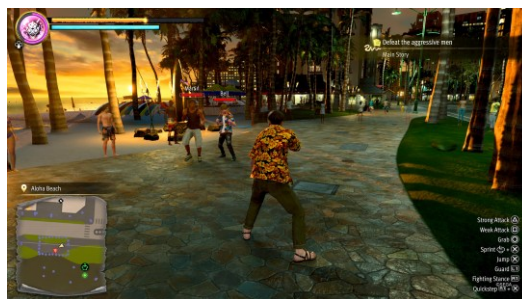
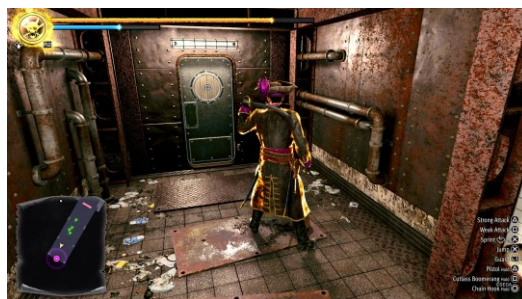
Combat styles from *Zero* carry over, yet I just never felt very good with it. Despite a lot of variety in styles, abilities and upgrades, I often found myself flailing like a fool, punching air, and fruitlessly trying to break out of botched combos.

Still, it was definitely worth playing on my way to seeing the entire series to completion.

PS4 game played on PS5.

Originally posted: 08/19/2023.

Mini-Rev: Like a Dragon – Pirate Yakuza



Full Title: *Like a Dragon – Pirate Yakuza in Hawaii*

I haven't figured out how RGG Studio is so successful in their balancing act between emotional, mature story beats and utterly goofy, absurd ones.

One moment, Majima is stopping acts of abuse or helping a stranger; the next, he's snapping photos of big bald exhibitionists or getting conned into thinking a tiger cub can communicate with him telepathically.

It's all set against the backdrop of modern-day pirates and the quest for a legendary treasure, and it's great.

As a side story of sorts, it's easy to enjoy even if you don't know the decades-spanning lore of the series. The few bits you need are explained in-game.

The live-action scenes featuring the crew's chef in a Bachelor-like competition are hilarious.

Lots of action, great characters, tons of mini-games. I loved it.

*Played on console: PS5.
Originally posted: 03/06/2025.*

Mini-Review: Crash Bandicoot – Remake



Full Title: *N.Sane Trilogy – Crash Bandicoot*

I have no nostalgia for *Crash*. I only ever played the GameBoy Advance one, which I liked well enough if I recall.

But, with *Crash 4* supposedly being fantastic, and in the interest of closing a big gap in my gaming portfolio so to speak, I'm working my way through the remake trilogy.

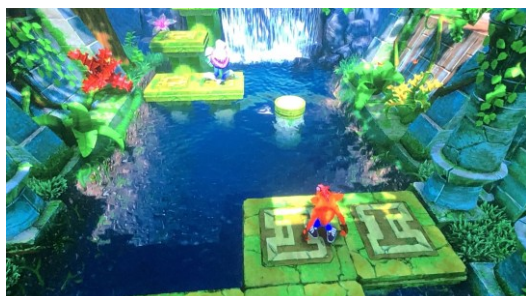
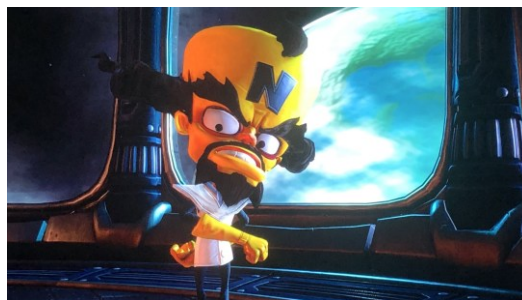
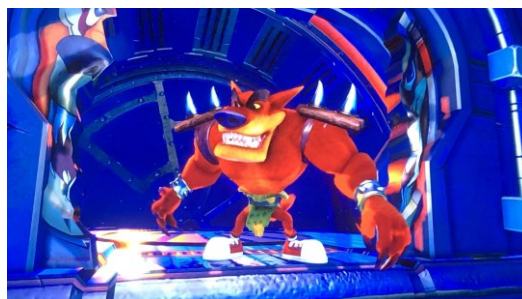
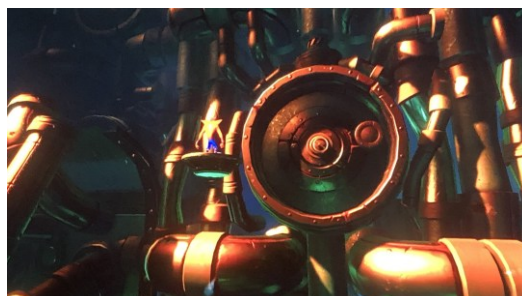
This first one didn't grab me. It just felt off somehow, like it wants to control in 2D yet gives you enough 3D movement to let you fail (walk off edges, miss jumps) when you shouldn't. Maybe it's just a product of the original game but some levels were more frustrating than fun, despite a good "learn by practice" progression.

When I'm willing to cheese a hard level by walking along a bridge's rope side, it says something.

Plus, I only felt like playing a couple levels a night.

*Played on console: PS4 Pro.
Originally posted: 09/14/2020.*

Mini-Review: Crash Bandicoot 2 – Remake



Full Title: *N.Sane Trilogy – Crash Bandicoot 2 – Cortex Strikes Back*

I enjoyed this quite a bit more than the first one, although I don't see myself replaying levels to find all the secrets, break all the boxes, or get all the PS trophies. It's made for doing that, and if there wasn't so much else I want to play, I might.

I found the levels in *Crash Bandicoot 2 Remake* to be more fun and less frustrating, while still challenging to somebody like me, well past the quicker reflexes of my gaming youth.

Maybe the checkpoints were better, or the enemies more predictable, or the platforming a bit more solid, or maybe I just acclimated to it after playing through the first game.

Whatever the reason, I had a better time and looked forward to a few levels a night, rather than just wanting to be done with it. It's a fun game.

*Played on console: PS4 Pro.
Originally posted: 10/27/2020.*

Mini-Review: Crash Bandicoot 3 – Remake



Full Title: *N.Sane Trilogy – Crash Bandicoot 3 – Warped*

This completes my playthrough of the *N.Sane Trilogy*; the remake of the first three games. I have no idea if I even liked these games. I didn't *dislike* them, but I just never felt compelled to 100% any levels or go for trophies.



Each one felt a little better and played a little better.

Warped introduces new abilities earned by beating each world's boss. It's just... the platforming and main spin-attack is fine, but just never clicked for me the way other 3D platformers have. It always felt just a bit "off" somehow; a bit rigid. Not quite fluid enough; hard to explain.



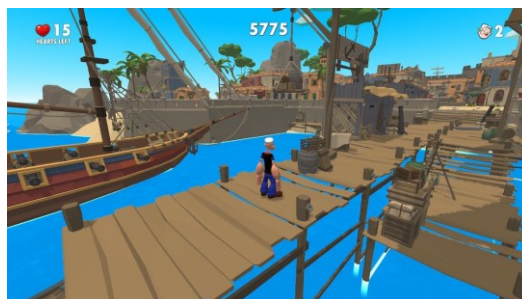
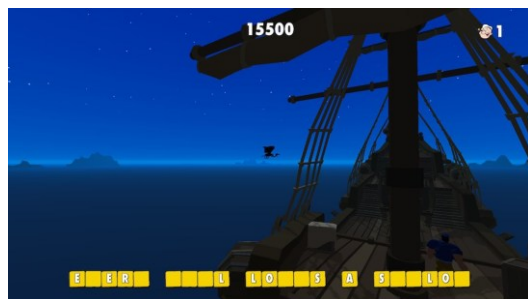
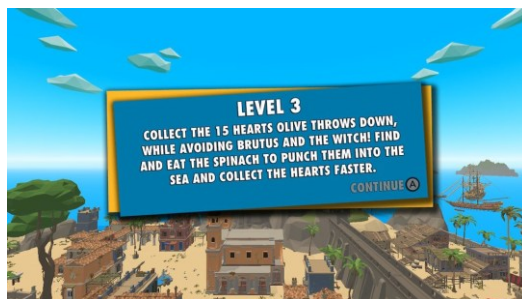
The double-jump ability was a welcome addition, but kind of finicky at times. I'm not a racing game guy so the driving levels were a pain.



I still want to play last year's new *Crash 4*, but I hope it's better.

*Played on console: PS4 Pro.
Originally posted: 02/21/2021.*

Mini-Review: Popeye



It's only going to take two tweets to mini-review *Popeye*. I don't remember even buying this, but I hope I didn't pay much.

Who is this even for? Fans of the arcade game would probably prefer a more faithful prettied-up version of the *Donkey Kong*-like classic, rather than this bare-bones third person reimagining of it.

It seems aimed at kids, but dual stick controls might make it tough for younger ones. I got stuck in the geometry once.

No desire to get a high score; the leaderboard is local only. I'm amazed that this game even exists.

Played on console: Switch.

Originally posted: 08/07/2022.

Capsule Review: Celeste



A good, challenging game. Maybe it's an effect of the GOTY hype, but it didn't impact me the way it has others. I expected to be blown away, but I wasn't. It's very well done, sure, with precision platforming that's as much pattern-based as skill-based.

Played on console: Switch.

Originally posted: 11/28/2018.

The Final Stage

Idiots in the Government Co-Opt Halo

This was originally in *Recent Events*, but I've moved it here and made some adjustments.

I came close to deleting it entirely. We're in an error of censorship and repercussions for criticizing the current US administration. We aren't just headed towards fascism. We're already there. The damage that has been done to this country in under a year will likely take decades to fix and recover from.

There are, of course, far worse things going on than their sudden fixation on video games. I could write pages about the bone-headed and cruel direction our "leaders" have taken, with policies not focused on helping all human beings, but focused on punishing dissenters and promoting backwards ideals.

Instead, here's my take on the recent social media blitz from ICE and the White House, as they begin to pollute the hobby we all love.

The ghoulish Gestapo known as ICE (or the Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency) used the image of a *Halo* warthog on a *Halo* ring with the wording "Destroy the Flood" on social media as a dehumanizing recruitment tactic, apparently likening undocumented immigrants to the overwhelming parasitic alien invaders from the game.

The White House account itself posted a goofy image of our pathetic moron-in-chief dressed up as the Master Chief, following up from a silly GameStop declaration that the console wars are over. They also dug in with nonsense about the mentally unwell clown who occupies the nation's top post being the only one who can give "power to the players", and that this absolute unqualified fool is somehow the one responsible for ending said console wars. He's the same demented sack of feces, mind you, who blamed gun violence on video games and urged intervention just a few years ago. Now, he thinks gamers love him.

Source:

<https://www.pcgamer.com/games/us-government-uses-halo-images-in-a-call-to-destroy-immigration-microsoft-declines-to-comment/>

Double Devil Summoner

I've tried to keep track and not re-use one of my mini-reviews in multiple issues, but in [issue #24](#) I accidentally included my *SMT: Devil Summoner* review again, which I had already included way back in [issue #4](#). Oops!

Next Week

Even as I wrap up each issue, the little gears in my mind keep spinning with ideas for the next one. I keep a list of them, but many of them just don't feel fleshed out or interesting yet.

An idea I've had from the start is to write about shovelware – the cheaply-made throw-away games that exist only to make a quick buck or two. If I can make that interesting (and hopefully in a not-too-negative way), I'll write about that for next week's issue.



End Credits

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The screenshot from *Undertale* (appearing below the table of contents on the first page) was found [here](https://www.bliwwatch.com/undertale-screenshots) at BlizzardWatch.

Screenshots and images used in this week's main feature article (*Feast Mode – Playing With Your Food*) came from various places on the web. These number links reference them in the same order in which they appear in the article:

[1] [2] [3] [4] [5] [6] [7] [8] [9] [10] [11] [12] [13] [14] [15] [16] [17] [18] [19] [20] [21] [22] [23] [24] [25] [26] [27] [28] [29] [30] [31] [32] [33] [34]

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Images of the physical games in the "Collection Inspection" feature are photos I took of games in my own collection and weren't sourced from the internet.

Screenshots used in my video game mini-reviews and some screenshots used in other articles or features that weren't already attributed to a different source were captured by me in-game and are used here in what I believe is "fair use".

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