



Games

Chris Petty, Sophomore

Predator: Concrete Jungle.

Summary:

Loosely based on the **Predator** movie franchise, this was definitely one to buy. The game player is a Predator who has been sent to Earth in the 1930's. You do some serious damage to a Mafia family; however, things go terribly wrong, and you are in need of rescue. The Predators are a race based on honor, and since you had to be rescued, you are sent to an abandoned planet where you must wait for another chance to prove yourself. 100 years pass. The Chief Predator has come for you, and not for tea and crumpets. Apparently on your last hunt on earth, you dropped technology. The humans have researched the technology to the point that they are using it against the Predators, killing off every group that comes to earth for a hunt. So you are sent back to the same place you were in at the beginning to get revenge. However, the scenery has completely changed.

Gameplay:

You have access to basically all the skills and weapons the Predator has. You've got the basic weapons: the combistick, wrist blades, spear gun and plasmacaster. Then there are the weapons you find along the way: the glaive, the maul, the net gun, and the smart disc. There are also firetraps and EMP (Electro Magnetic Pulse) traps you can use. Through out you can upgrade your weapons by finding the upgrades. You also have three different enhanced vision modes that help you see different useful items, cloaking ability that allows you to move without being seen, and you can also pull off combo attacks easily since the big melee button is right next to the small melee button. The manual camera is a little sketchy, but when you get used to it, it's not a big deal.

Predator: Concrete Jungle gets a **9.5 out of 10.**

XBox – Halo 2

Chris Polito, Sophomore

Anyone who owns an XBOX knows of the extremely popular game **Halo**, and its even greater sequel **Halo 2**. **Halo 2** is a first person shooter in which you play two main characters throughout the game.

You start out playing Master Chief, the hero and the main warrior for the human race. As Master Chief, you blast your way through hordes of aliens and zombie-like creatures, using some of the most conveniently placed weapons throughout the maps.

As the second character, you play an exiled alien Arbator. You have been exiled for your war crimes, and instead of killing you, your previous war buddies send you on a serious mission to take out a rebellious group of aliens. As Arbator, you too will fight through armies of humans, zombies, and aliens.

The controls for this cleverly laid out game are incredibly easy to get a feel for, and the first person shooting makes it seem as though you are actually on the battlefield. The wide variety of weapons will test your close-combat and your sniping skills, and the numerous amount of missions will lead you to encounter some mind-blowing things, from a huge mechanical spider on the streets of South Africa to zombie infested laboratories located in the depth of the jungle. If you've got time to spare, or you're just a big fan of shoot 'em up games, you should definitely give **Halo 2** a try.

Old School Gaming!

Logan "T" King, Sophomore

For this article, I chose a game originally sold before the dawning of the Sony Playstation/Sega Saturn, reviewed it, and, if applicable, compared it to its ports (such as NES to Master System, SNES to Mega-Drive, or Atari VCS to Mattel Intellivision). For this first month, I will touch upon **Super Mario Bros. World for the Nintendo Super Nintendo**.

Super Mario Bros. World was a very important game for its day. Nintendo had to answer SEGA's challenge brought on by its marketing campaign of "**Blast Processing**" (which stated that the Genesis/Mega-Drive's main CPU was faster than the one in the Super Nintendo) and the campaign's selling point, **Sonic the Hedgehog**. They also needed to show what the Super Nintendo was truly capable of. Therefore, they gave Mario creator Shigeru Miyamoto free reign over Nintendo's most precious franchise, and what a great job he ended up doing.

SMB: W has perhaps the best graphics of any of the Super Nintendo's launch games. The well animated characters are second only to the highly colorful hand drawn back-grounds. Compared to **Sonic the Hedgehog 2** (which was also hand drawn but was compressed more and had less colors), **SMB: W** was very colorful and smooth in its appearance, and the nod would go towards **SMB: W**.

The control for the game is probably the most precise of any game I have ever played, including previous Mario games. Mario controls instantly after button presses and jumping is as easy as you make it.

There are many new features to this game in response to previous entries in the series. The super feather gives Mario a cape with which he can fly high up above the levels. The fire flower is back, and when combined with the new spin jump, unleashes hot fireball death in both directions. There is a new inventory slot to keep one item in (mushroom, fire flower or feather). Perhaps the biggest change to **SMB: W** was the introduction of Yoshi, who acts like a cross between a pack mule and Kirby. He can be used to eat enemies, fly, and retrieve hard to get items and more. Also new (and relatively novel at the time) was the ability to save your game after doing things such as beating a boss or ghost house.

The size of this game is probably the best thing about it. In total, it has 96 level endings, 60+ levels, and many cool secrets. For example, if you beat all level endings, you are presented with a modified game, a palette change and many enemies with changed appearances.

So how good is it overall? Well, barring some petty glitches involving point value variations, this is one of the best games of the 16-bit era. It gave Nintendo back some of the market share that it lost to SEGA and started the second real console war. **Super Mario Bros World** gets 10 out of 10 in my book.

What you may be asking is, how did SEGA react? Well, that will be covered next month in my review of **Sonic the Hedgehog** CD for the SEGA CD.

Success can be measured in millimeters or in kilometers. If you're doing your best, who cares the distance.
--Samuel Richardson

Movie Review Donnie Darko

Danielle Mammano, Junior

At the request of fellow staff member Chris Polito, I've decided to review what is quite possibly the finest third movie for any director I've known. Richard Kelly defies the stereotype of **old directors**, being the young age of twenty-six and still able to make a gem of a film. **Donnie Darko** stars Jake Gyllenhall and his sister Maggie. You may know Jake from **Bubble Boy** and **October Sky**, but his sister has been in fewer movies than he, but if you've ever seen **Cecil B. Demented**, you may know her.

Donnie Darko takes place in Middlesex, Virginia, and revolves around a strange young boy named, you guessed it, Donnie Darko. The movie opens with a faint image of a sunrise, a fallen bike, and then focuses on Donnie himself, who is sleeping right in the middle of the road.

As the movie progresses, you find out this is not the first time he's gotten up and walked away in his sleep. Donnie is troubled and plagued by visions of a demented rabbit named Frank (Played by James Duval). I must say the costume design for Frank is pretty cool. The face is just plain flawless metalwork, twisted and skull-like with gnarled teeth jutting out here and there. I must admit the first time he was shown, it caught me off guard.

After a rather confusing beginning, we see Donnie in bed late at night. His sister has just snuck back into the house after a night out with her boyfriend. A strange, eerie voice whispers the words, "**Wake up.**" Donnie does, and the voice leads him outside in a half-sleepwalking state. As Donnie walks stiffly forward, we begin to see a figure standing on the lawn: Frank. His twisted bunny ears and mangled face are barely visible, setting the mood all the better. After a brief silence, Donnie asks who he is. Frank replies grimly, slowly, "**28 days... six hours... 42 minutes... 12 seconds. That... is when the world... will end.**" To which Donnie returns in a raspy voice and a creepy grin, "**Why?**"

Frank never tells him why. But in the instant that follows, a gigantic crash is heard. The chandelier shakes violently as his sister ducks for cover. Donnie wakes up on a golf course and hurries home to see the destruction. A plane engine from nowhere crashed right into his room. After being forced to stay in a hotel room, Donnie begins to unravel a strange mystery, ultimately discovering who Frank really is and why he is haunting him. Sessions with his psychologist become more productive, and I guarantee you the ending will blow you away in both its extreme sadness and sheer unexpected twist.

There is also a well-chosen song for the movie's theme – Gary Jules' cover of **Tears For Fears Mad World** (my that sentence was a bit confusing now wasn't it?). A beautiful yet depressing song, it seems to fit with the film like a puzzle piece.

My favorite dialogue exchange was when Frank sits down with Donnie in the movie theater; Donnie looks over to him and says, "**Why do you wear that stupid bunny suit?**" After a brief pause, Frank returns almost mockingly, "**Why do you wear that stupid man suit?**"

Moment of Realization: There was none. One of the few mysteries/suspense films I haven't been able to figure out.

Overall, this movie gets a 10/10 from me.

Don't forget to check out the movies at the newly renovated Ohmann Theater.