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Hello everybody, Max Roberts here. Before we get into the episode with Matt, I just wanted to come talk to you really quick and kind of remind you and update you, I guess, about why the show hasn't come out since September. About two weeks after my episode with Casey Liss, which was a time capsule before becoming a father, I became a father. And so on September 27th my daughter Eloise was born and so I've been Busy with that kind of taking most of a break from podcasting. We've still been producing chapter select episodes The season 4 is getting ready to wrap up in season 5 which is Resident Evil is getting ready to start But max frequency hasn't had any new episodes since then And so I just want to thank you for your patience as I get back into the saddle with my solo program here. I appreciate it. The support, especially in the last two episodes, has been fantastic and it means the world to me. So I appreciate your patience. I've got a lot of plans and guest ideas going into 2023. So I'm hoping and planning on making this feed more consistent throughout the year, at least more active than it has been in 2022. So I appreciate that. Thank you all very much. And now on to the show with Matt. Hello everybody and welcome to the Max Frequency Podcast. I am your host, Max Roberts, and on this episode, I am joined by Matt from I Finished a Video Game. Hi, Matt. - Hello, how's it going? - It's fine and dandy. How are you today, sir? - I'm doing good, I'm doing very good. Yeah, happy to be here. - Well, thank you so much. So Matt is here because I saw a tweet recommending a Castlevania series retrospective. I was like, that sounds pretty interesting. And then I click on the video and it's nearly seven and a half hours. And I thought, "Oh boy, that's a long video." And I started watching it and I couldn't stop watching it. Now I did stop because I didn't watch it straight seven hours. I watched it in chunks. They are designed to be broken up. Just before we get onto that. I couldn't stop watching it. And so I shared it on Max Frequency and I realized I just, I had to know how you did this, the whole, so I reached out and you were kind enough to respond and agree to come on the show. So thank you so much for sharing your time with me. - No, that's all right, that's all right. I actually quite enjoy kind of looking back at the projects I've done and kind of debriefing and breaking them down and kind of learning from them. So as much as I hope it's an interesting subject Talk about it's actually rather helpful for me as well because I kind of arranged my thoughts about About the video. Yeah, I I do the same thing. Actually, I have another show chapter select and at the end of each season So we we pick a series of games and kind of bounce back and forth between their entries And so at the end of every season I write a whole behind the scenes that breaks down You know how I edited the show and videos and things like that. I love Looking back and learning from the creative process and then how to make it better the next go. Yeah I I do the same on on my patreon. I kind of I call it the retrospective debrief I go back through each of the videos afterwards Just kind of yeah, that's my thoughts what I would do differently, you know things I like things I don't like I think I think it's a healthy way to approach your yeah your own work You know shows says it, you know, you're trying to grow as a as a creator, I suppose. Yeah, it's something I look forward to it's you're kind of doing a retrospective on the retrospective. Yeah, it's very meta, isn't it? Yeah, it really could it could get something you could only be truly interested in if you if you create retrospectives Retrospectives of retrospectives. Oh my gosh, how the retrospective on the seven-hour Castlevania retrospective I don't know how long that would be. I mean, well, I guess we're gonna try and condense it

Yeah, it could be very long I'll have to try and keep it sure So you started I finished a video game back August of 2020 I believe is at least when the YouTube channel when YouTube says you you started on here and I just yeah Before diving into the Castlevania one, how did you decide to just jump into making these hours-long videos? I mean, people don't normally jump into YouTube and say, "I'm gonna make a two, three hour video." You know, 10, 15 minutes is usually where people start, I think. Yeah, I guess it's not particularly typical, but that is essentially how I started. So I finished a video game like originally was a website Where I? I guess if we want to go right to the start of it I I used to play tons of multiplayer games with with my friends and I found it to be quite an Unsatisfying way to play video games. I I felt like I never never got a huge amount out of it And I was kind of losing my love for the medium So I kind of made a conscious decision that I'd go back to playing single-player games And I would and I would play them start to finish I'd start a game and I would only stop playing it when I finished it Not kind of that experience of changing up how I approached video games You know, it was it was quite Quite fun to be honest. It was it was quite a fun process and I was enjoying playing games start to finish in order not playing four games at once, just sticking to one at a time. I was enjoying that so much that I decided to start up just like a little website where I kind of chronicled what it was like playing through these games. And it wasn't very big at all, like at all. But someone suggested that I, you know, do a little bit of social media for it and some of the feedback from people was, "Hey, this is quite interesting. Have you thought about maybe sharing more of the process behind this. You could start a stream and share the journey through the games with people and then post the reviews onto the website afterwards. And I thought it was just when Covid was starting, we were in the first lockdown here in the UK, I was technically working through it but it was working from home and I thought, you know, I've got a lot of time on my hands. That sounds like a pretty great idea. And so for the first, I guess proper year or so, I was streaming on Twitch and writing little reviews and putting them on this website. And that was what I finished a video game was. That was where it originated. But the problem with that is that, no disrespect to anyone who likes spending a lot of time on Twitch. Twitch is not a very pleasant place to spend a lot of time. And I quite quickly got pretty disillusioned with running a stream and then writing reviews off the back of it. And I thought, you know, I'm still really enjoying playing through games. I'm still really enjoying writing about games. I still really want this outlet, but I don't wanna be doing what I'm doing. And so I thought, you know, I've got this YouTube channel. It says I started in 2020, but I think the first proper upload to it was maybe, you know, August 2021 or something like that. And I thought you know, I'll try my hand at making a YouTube video So I think the first proper one I made was one about Pokemon nuzlockes or or something like that and that was That was fun. Like that was that was cool and all but I thought you know that that was cool But I want to do something better than this. I want to I want to push myself I want to try and do something that other people aren't doing You know, which is a weird way to think considering I think at this time. I had maybe a hundred subscribers subscribers. But that and so that got me onto the first lengthy retrospective. I thought, you know, I really enjoy watching long videos. I really, really like long everything. You know, I'm a big prog rock guy. Like I love long movies. I love huge books. Like I really like the experience of working your way through something massive. And so I really wanted that to be a part of it and I thought, you know, nobody else is really... there are people out there on YouTube who are making videos like this but they're very much geared around RPGs and computer games. There's tons of videos like this about Dark Souls and Deus Ex and you know, Vampire the Masquerade Bloodlines, these sorts of games that sort of naturally lend themselves to that format because of their complexity and how long you can spend digging away at them. I suppose the poster child for it really is, you know, Patrician's like 10 hour long Elder Scrolls videos, they're the kind of poster child for that kind of video. And I thought, you know, as great as that is, there's no one really giving that amount of attention and detail to older titles, to the kind of the retro world of video games, which I found odd because that's where all the history is, that's where all the influence is, you know, you can find reams and reams of interviews and retrospectives all about, you know, the influence of something like Symphony of the Night, for example, and yet there's just not people out there dedicating that

same amount of time to discussing them, Like a game like Bloodborne or Sekiro or something like that. So I thought, I'll give it a try. I'll pick a weird older game that I really like that I think has an interesting story and I'll just make this really detailed video about it. I'll talk about all the things I want to talk about. And yeah, that led to the Jade Empire retrospective which I think got maybe 100 views in a month or something like that. It did not capture people's imagination. But I really enjoyed the process of making it. I really enjoyed writing about it. I found it to be really satisfying, the whole concept to publishing process. And yeah, I wanted to make more. And I decided after that, oh, hey, you know another series that I really love, I think has a really interesting history, Prince of Persia series, you know? Nobody's covered that. Nobody's done every game. And so I put that together and yes, slowly but surely started to get more views and more people started noticing it. And I think by the Christmas of that year, I think I hit 500 subscribers. I think I did a post on Christmas day. My community kind of tab on YouTube unlocked on Christmas day as I hit 500 subscribers. Like post Merry Christmas to everybody. And then it just, I guess I just kept doing it And it kept growing from there. People wanted to watch it. People wanted to see these really long videos exploring the history of older titles and giving them the same kind of love and attention that more modern franchises get. So yeah, that's kind of the backstory. I guess that's a very long winded way of telling it, wasn't it? I should probably try and keep my answers a bit more concise. - No, I think by the nature of your very videos, I think you are a thorough person. And I personally love it because I wrote kind of also right before The Last of Us Part II came out, which was also kind of an early COVID time game, I wrote this history of Naughty Dog during the PS4 generation. And I called that Chasing the Stick. And so I didn't produce a video about it. I did write and I made it a podcast audiobook type thing. That was like 18,000 words just about how they even got to The Last of Us Part II. And so I've always had I think an appreciation for these deep historical dives that provide context for just how games or series or books or things just came to be because they don't just come out of nowhere. There's an influence that goes into the creation process and then there's the product and then the reception and there's just so much beyond here's the game and you run around and do this or collect that and here are the credits. Yeah, there's an inherent appeal to something being the complete account of something. I think there's an appeal to something being the definitive account of a thing. I've always felt that. And I think that naturally, if you appreciate that element, it naturally leads you towards making longer and longer accounts as you discover more things and want to talk about more elements of a series on what elements of a video game or a studio. So how did you decide to tackle Castlevania? Because Castlevania has a lot of games, honestly, I knew it had a lot of games but I didn't realize how many games until you, your video. I think a lot of people don't. I had no idea there was a Wii fighting game for Castlevania, just wild things. So how do you, you obviously were aware of that going in, I would think, maybe you weren't, but going into the creative process for this video, how did you decide, I'm gonna do Castlevania? Well so, really I'd had the idea almost from those early days when I first started doing these retrospectives, as soon as the Prince of Persia video started to do kind of okay and I kind of realized okay people want to see these complete accounts these complete histories of older franchises your mind immediately goes to okay well which ones would I like to talk about and Castlevania was there right from the very beginning just because I I'm quite a big Castlevania fan you know I before I'd done this video I played quite a lot of Castlevania I mean, it's one of those franchises that I feel like has always been kind of there in my life. You know, growing up, I'd played the Game Boy games and then, you know, it was always a big part of early internet video game discussions as well. I talk a lot in the video about the impact that the angry video game nerd had on the series reputation and old creators like that, like old sort of JonTron and Game Grumps videos old ScrewAttack videos even before YouTube was big. The guys behind those channels clearly loved Castlevania, so it always felt like it was a big part of video game culture. But then it's got this perfect kind of flip side to that where it's never really been massively successful, it's kind of ever present without real kind of critical recognition. There's a few games like, you know, Symphony of the Night which lots of people talk about, It's obviously well known as an influential title, but in a series that's as long lived as Castlevania, there's surprisingly little

concrete success. And so the whole franchise just has this really interesting dynamic of having a lot of recognition people, people know, a lot of people know some stuff about it, but there's all this nuance to the story, all this interesting tragedy and failure, which I just thought would make for a really good video. And to be honest, a lot of the stuff that's in it, I kind of discover as I'm researching it as well. So I had some ideas about the history of Igarashi and especially to do with the very earliest days on the NES, Akimatsu, the original creator. I knew that stuff beforehand and I knew I wanted to talk about that. But then you uncover more kind of pieces of the narrative as you're doing the research for it. I think a big way that I approach my videos, I'm always trying to craft it into a narrative. I think one of the reasons people like the videos. It's not just 33 video game reviews in a row. It's an actual kind of cohesive journey that kind of tells a story throughout the course of the entire video. And so I'm always looking to kind of craft that while I'm researching it. And you kind of get a feel for the story of the franchise, as it were, as you're doing it. And yeah, it just, it was just really obvious that Castlevania would make for a really good one. The trouble really wasn't the subject matter, it was the actual doing of the video, the actual making of it. Playing through 33 games and writing the script and doing the editing, that was the thing that put me off of doing it, rather than the subject matter, which I feel like I knew was pretty strong and people would be interested, especially because I talk about at the start of the video, there's this weird kind of dichotomy with Castlevania where it's more popular than it's ever been thanks to the Netflix show, but the video games are deader than they've ever been. So, you know, I feel like me and my friends have been talking about that since the Netflix show first came out and as a big historical Castlevania fan. Seemed an interesting I was pretty confident in that, but yeah, it's the doing that's the problem. My history with Castlevania pretty much was just, I played Symphony of Night for the first time in 2015 and I didn't even properly beat it, I only got to Shaft in the Inverted Castle, I don't think I collected all the pieces of Dracula or whatever. And then I bought Rondo of Blood on the Wii shop because that was getting ready to shut down and at the time that seemed to be the only way to play the game. Now you can play Rondo of Blood practically anywhere, or I guess really just on PlayStation. Frustratingly, yeah, just on PlayStation. No Switch or PC port for some baffling reason. I feel like it's tied up with Sony in some way because it seems to be locked to the PSP game, right? That's the only explanation I can think of because it seems like an absolute no-brainer to port that to other consoles. So there must be something, a legal requirement that's holding that back from happening. - Yeah, but I replayed them last year on PlayStation and got the platinum for that Requiem, I believe is the name of that collection. So I spent time there, but I didn't really, I've only dabbled in other games. And so it's kind of just a series that has been around. I mean, you talk about it in the video, Metroidvania, it's the other half of a genre of games that I personally enjoy. - And one that's very popular as well. One that's hugely popular these days as well. That's the kind of funny thing about it. The name is more recognizable than ever. Yet that's not reflected in sales or games that are currently in production. - It's wild. And I actually, I just started the anime last night after finishing your videos. I gotta get more Castlevania in my life. So I feel like I'm gonna feel very, I mean I guess I have a lot of games I can play now because I have a much larger appreciation for the series now, but there's nothing new in the pipeline, at least officially and publicly. When did you realize, I guess you, having history with Castlevania, but when did you realize that the scope was more than two to three hours, which seems to be kind of your comfortable range for most of your retrospective so far. When did you realize this was more? - I think I knew from the start. I sometimes kind of speculatively kind of like plan out videos that I might think might be interesting. And you can get a pretty good sense of how long a video is gonna take. And by the time I had planned it out and saw that it was 33 games, I knew it was gonna take a long time. Mainly because something that I really feel really strongly about is I do genuinely play through all of the games start to finish before I start writing about them. Not just to capture all the footage to use in the videos, but also because I think it adds authenticity to the review. You actually get my experience with the game and you get my genuine thoughts on it, not just talking points that are regurgitated from watching other people's videos or reading contemporaneous reviews. I think that's really important to the vibe of the channel. And

honestly, that is one of the things that adds the most time into the process. I think you could probably put together a video that spoke about every single Castlevania game in a quarter of the time it took me. But I think it would lack some of the authenticity that I would like to think is present in the video. - As someone who watched it, there is authenticity because I couldn't believe you played or beat some of these games. Because, you know, I wanna talk about how you, like how you even went about playing all of them because they're on so many different consoles. Some of these versions aren't necessarily accessible anymore at least in a legal manner. You know, you're playing WiiWare games, You know, Wii, PS3, any of it. Now, some of them are easier, like the collections that are out. - Sure. - Like how, and then the fact that you actually play them all. - So it's not actually, yeah, I mean it's not actually as hard as you think. Mainly because I have always been a huge, huge, huge proponent of emulation. And I think that our industry has a very, very problematic relationship with emulation and emulation's place in the industry. For example, I think there's a huge amount of Nintendo franchises that are currently active today that I think owe pretty much everything about their ongoing popularity to the work of the emulation community in the early 2000s when video game companies weren't even attempting to put together collections or to port games from previous generations onto new generations. It was thanks to that community that a lot of franchises stayed alive to be resurrected later on. And emulation has come so, so, so, so far in the past 20 years. And really, I think it's pretty easy to play almost any game that you want to, including games that were only released in Japan through emulation. There's entire communities completely dedicated to translating every game from a console into English. So for example, Rondo of Blood obviously was only released on the PC Engine CD2 in Japan. So you'd think, well, that's completely inaccessible. You're never gonna be able to play it. But the passion behind translating it into English and putting together the definitive English language version is out there on the internet. And it's really easy to access, to be honest. And so, yeah, in terms of being able to play the games, it's not that hard. It's quite funny, really, because when I first started out, I'm quite a big, obviously I'm a big retro video game fan anyway, and so naturally that leads you to also being a little bit of a collector as well. - Oh, yeah. - So I am a bit of a collector too. And when I originally started the channel, I just want, I wanted to only record and play through physical copies of the games. The problem is that that's a noble cause, but it opens you up to a lot of problems. And specifically with the Prince of Persia retrospective, I had huge issues with capturing footage in a way that was usable and losing footage and footage being corrupted. And it really, when you're working on, That's frustrating if you're working on a 20 minute video. When you're working on a three hour long video, it's intolerable. So after that I learned my lesson and I thought, you know, if I wanna capture footage in a way that actually makes these videos watchable, I'm gonna need to use emulation. And then, you know, it's a cool move anyway, 'cause it opens you up to being able to talk about, you know, a host of games that you might not be able to if you are sticking only to physical. - So did you play everything just on a computer then? Or did you play some games on real hardware for games you own? When we crept toward the DS era of Castlevania, I was super curious how you were going to capture that. And it looks like you just used an emulator with the two screens side by side, which is exactly what I would have done in your shoes too. 'Cause the DS capture is so expensive. - Yeah, yeah, well absolutely. That's the thing, isn't it? capture off of a physical DS or 3DS is absolutely prohibitive. Oh yeah. So, you know, I just captured it using an emulator. It's quite funny really. It might be weird but I actually use a Mac to do all of my playing and all of my capturing. Well I also use a Mac so we are... Oh cool, yeah, you're a convert like me. Yeah, it's funny really because that would have horrified me to say maybe five years ago, but Mac emulation is absolutely incredible because instead of the community sort of being fractured across lots of different emulators all pulling in different directions, everybody's just centered on two or three emulators that can do absolutely everything and they're amazingly high quality. So yeah, I pretty much just, I've got my laptop and I lounge in my chair on the sofa and play through these games, capture the footage, and then, yeah, I've got a PC that I do my editing on, and yeah, it's actually pretty easy. And in a way, I actually think being focused on older titles makes it even easier because, you know, you're just capturing 2D footage or something.

The file sizes aren't very big, you know, you're not capturing, you know, 60 hours of God of War on PS5 and then trying to edit with these enormous files. You know, so it's it's it's not actually all that hard. It's just time-consuming. That's that's the thing that the difficulty comes from the planning and the time investment I would say rather than the actual the actual playing as that's that's kind of fun to be honest. Yeah, as someone who did Capture all of God of War on ps5 and then edit that footage into a podcast episode. I can say yes, it is beefy. Very large files. Yeah. Yeah, whenever whenever I'm doing a video and I get to the more modern titles I always dread it because you know, I'm gonna have to start working with with some enormous reams of Oh, yeah, I can Oh especially and really I guess Castlevania only ever went up to the Xbox 360 and ps3 generation as far as yeah new titles, so you weren't really pushing anything beyond. You know 1080 I guess no no no no yeah, Lord of Shadow is the last the last one and and and yeah Realistically Lords of Shadow 1 & 2 are the only well and mirror of fate the HD port of it. They're the only they're the only HD games in the entire series. You know which which in it in its in of itself is is another oddity that makes Castlevania so interesting to talk about you know 33 games of which only three are HD modern titles, you know, which is very odd because you know you think of you think of you know yearly releases and and you know iterative sequels as being a relatively modern phenomenon but you know there's Konami pumping out the games in the uh in the early 90s and 2000s you know was a Castlevania game every year for nine years almost. I can't I couldn't believe it when you said that in the video, looking back, they put out all these Gameboy games and I was like, "Oh my gosh, there really was a Castlevania game." It was an annualized franchise to a degree. And they were cranking out these, frankly, great games fairly consistently and quickly. And they just seemed to fly under the sales radar at least. Yeah, well it's kind of an interesting kind of quirk of older game development in a way. And it's why I'm really drawn to talking about older titles, just because games back then were - teams were so much smaller, the games were so much cheaper to produce, they had - and also the industry itself was a little less kind of rabidly focused on profit. They were of course still very focused on profit, but maybe not so much as we've come to become, we've become used to, but it allowed for a real pace behind development and creative space for developers. And I find that personally really interesting. I kind of see the industry as the pre-HD era and the post-HD era, and I kind of see them as very, very different. - When the costs go up and then you introduce the internet and microtransactions and DLC, it just, it totally changed the dynamic between consumers and developers. - Absolutely, and I kind of see it as a, it's almost like a natural conclusion of where we are today, is a natural conclusion of that change. Almost like these companies are responding to consumers in a way, because we want better looking games and better looking graphics, and that increases the development costs and then that increases the risk of creating games. And then that brings with it more monetization, which leads to DLC and microtransactions. And yeah, it creates a real stark difference between how video games operated in the 90s and how they're operating today, which can be quite odd to go back to, because we can end up, We talk about an annualized franchise like Castlevania and how did they manage to keep the quality so high? But it's weirdly true of quite a few franchises from back then. Final Fantasy is a great example. Final Fantasy in the late 90s was an annualized franchise. And people talk about some of those games like they're the greatest games ever made. Whereas annualized releases in 2022 is a, well, it's almost a mark of shame, isn't it? (laughs) There's a fatigue with it today that maybe just because I was younger back in the early 2000s, I was born in '94, so then it didn't really matter if it was annualized to me, so maybe I'm just an age thing, but today there's certainly a fatigue. Even Assassin's Creed has gone the taking a few years off route, which has, I think, helped that series reinvent itself. Not that I'm a particular fan of that direction to begin with, but it's helped the franchise at least. Well there, Assassin's Creed is an interesting example because it's sort of so prevalent. I mean, I'm not even sure how many games there are in the franchise at this point, but we're talking, you know, it's got to be 25 plus, I would say. It's got to. If you throw in the various games. Yeah, for sure. And if you think, you know, Assassin's Creed 1 was an early Xbox 360 game, So we're not talking about a franchise that has its roots all the way back into the 2D era, it's relatively recent, yet there's a huge, huge spread of games

in that franchise, so that it's almost gone through sort of franchise fatigue multiple times, you know? They've kind of had to reinvent it. But yeah, it's interesting. I mean, this exact conversation is a perfect example of why I kind of like this kind of bird's eye view of franchises and their place in the industry. I find it very engaging to talk about and I think it's an interesting way to kind of look at our industry that we don't usually take. We're so used to talking about singular releases. We never really talk about franchises as a singular beast. That's kind of the direction I like to take the videos in, and I personally find it very interesting. So what was the research process like then? Because in your video there's, you know, interview footage clips and magazine articles, Metacritic scores, just, you know, all these snippets of information, but it gives you this context for the whole franchise and its development history. How do you research all of that and then organize it in a way that makes sense? Do you just do it a game at a time or what's that process like for you? Yeah, generally speaking it's a game at a time. I will play a game and then I'll sit down and I'll do my- I'll usually play a game and make notes while I'm playing it, my kind of initial take as it were. And then I kind of go off and do research and depending on what era that game's from, the research, you kind of get an idea of what kind of stuff might be out there. So for example, with a modern, more modern game, you know, you'll probably be looking on YouTube for behind the scenes interviews, interviews with different websites that have been uploaded. Whereas if you're dealing with a game from 1989, well, none of that stuff existed, so you're gonna have to look elsewhere. There's a lot of trawling through the Wayback Machine, and trying to find links to old forum posts. It's really given me, the research process for these videos has really given me an appreciation for just how much information is being lost on the internet. - Oh yeah. - Thanks to the move to, you know, web 2.0. So much of our information being centralised in a handful of websites. You know, there's nothing sadder than seeing a link to a really interesting sounding interview clicking on it and finding it's dead and there's no copy of it available anywhere. So it can kind of be quite a random process but it's just it's just really just hunting around seeing what information has survived and then going through it reading through it see seeing if there's anything interesting in there see see if there's anything that confirms the narrative that I've kind of Decided from my playthrough see if there's anything that challenges the narrative. I mean sometimes depending on the game I'll go into it with an idea of what I want to say about it already So a good example is in the Castlevania video there's a Castlevania 64 Which you know my my first exposure to it was through early creators being very negative around it And then I've really noticed there's been a real positive backlash to that where people talk about it a lot more positively these days and I kind of Already knew from my experiences with the game that I didn't really feel like either of these were Correct that the truth is that it's just a sort of bad game with some interesting ideas. It's not a masterpiece It's not a it's not the worst game ever made It's just kind of in in the middle And so sometimes I already have an idea of where I want to take it and the research is really more about justifying my point of view but but sometimes it can just be "Hey, let's just see what do people think of this game? What do people say about it? What survived onto the internet in 2022 that we can reference?" You'd be amazed how much stuff is out there if you're willing to sit and look for it. I've got clips from old issues of EGM and Nintendo Power that people have saved. When I find old magazines, those are the best. Yeah, for sure. I love the way they look in the video as well. I think purely from not even engaging with the information on the page, they just look cool. I was a big fan of magazines back in the day. I mourn their loss all the time. But it's really nice, and I can put some of them up, because you get the artwork and the big screenshots, and yeah, it looks great. But you'd be amazed how many other people are that there are out there who who collate this stuff together yeah, and it and Carl Sylvania is a is a beloved franchise with with a lot of hardcore fans, so that's been a lot of effort put into Keeping a lot of love the information, you know it could be give me tricky when you're talking about something a Bit slightly more niche to find to find the information You know, I knew thinking of a good example, but like for example, the video that I did before Castlevania was Dino Crisis Yeah, and for Dino Crisis 1 & 2, yeah sure there was plenty of information out there But by the time I got to Dino Crisis 3, which is a game that's broadly Nobody played it when it came out. Nobody likes it now. There's not been as much effort to

Maintain sources about that so it can be tricky depending on the game But you know the information is out there if you want to find it and just have to dig Yeah, pretty much just have to dig deep enough. Oh how So then you have all this history in this developmental context you're playing the games you have your own opinions And then there's just the straight-up summaries of the games - you know This game is about you know Trevor going here and doing that or here Simon or our card. How do you? How do you balance all of that to make this story that you're trying to tell in the retrospective? How do you do that? Yeah, the honest truth is I don't really know I Sort of I have a kind of weird process for for writing where I kind of just I have all of my my notes I'll have my notes about the game's history. I'll have my notes about my playthrough I'll have any notes. I've done before about possible interesting narrative that might be there to talk about the game and I just sort of write and I just see what comes out and I'll read back over it and if it's interesting, I'll keep it and if it's not interesting, I'll Start over. I think a big influence is I'm a huge history nerd. I'm a massive history nerd and I'm really passionate about history being told in an interesting and engaging way and so My kind of golden rule is that as long as it's interesting whether that's whether that's the history whether that's my own playthrough through I think that makes for an engaging watch so I always kind of approach it from that from that perspective you know trying to try to craft the narrative that's interesting whether that's built up of you know the history of the game or or my weird perspective on something as long as as long as it's written in a way that's you know interesting I think that uh I think that that makes it into the script it's a it's a bit weird because it's it's kind I don't really have like a proper process behind it. I just sort of write and see what comes out. And if it seems good, I keep it. And if not, I start over. I mean, some of the games in that video took a great many rewrites and I've really struggled with. It's a bit of an unreliable process because you can sometimes just get caught where you can't seem to get anything to stick or sound interesting, like Portrait of Ruin was one I've really struggled with. I think I must have rewritten that, God, like four or five times maybe, trying to find just an interesting way to talk about its mechanics, talk about its history. Because the one thing I want to make sure that I'm not really ever doing is just making a really dispassionate, boring review. I want to kind of inject some personality or some interest into it. And yeah, it's quite hard to, to get away from those formulas which define how we talk about video games, especially older video games. So essentially, as long as I feel like it's interesting, it makes the cut. I like it. I mean, again, because I've spent the last, I don't know how many days, just watching it over time. But there is this ebb and flow of the high points of the series and the low points and the transitions in the series like the Portrait of a Ruin. My context for the DS Castlevania games was there were really good Castlevania games on the DS was what I had always heard but I didn't know about the art style transition which you know that alone for Castlevania I think is a huge thing because it's so visually striking and then they go to this more anime style approach and it's out of a drive to recapture the Japanese audience and market. And it doesn't seem to work out that way. And then the mechanics of that game are so interesting because they wanted to have people play it together. So I could see how that game is struggling, but it's also this transition period for the series, which leads to Order of Ecclesia, which honestly seemed like the game. I'm like, "How have I never played this game?" Because Order of Ecclesia sounds amazing. I mean you're in the same boat as a lot of people. It's a brilliant game and yeah, but just hardly anyone's played it. And they kind of, it may have been Dawn of Sorrow, but it could have, I think it was Dawn of Sorrow, which is the one of the two first DS games was the one where the main character like becomes Dracula, but that's the bad ending or something like that sounded way better. That sounded way better than what the real ending is because you unlocked Julius mode, right? And then you played-- Yeah, that's right, that's right. Like, that sounds so cool! I was completely engaged by that, by that alternate mode. I find it so much more interesting than the traditional ending. I think the art style point is a great kind of example of the way I approach the writing, I just found that so interesting that they completely changed up something which is so iconic. You know, the Castlevania art style by Ayame Kojima, that's as famous as the gameplay itself. And I find it really interesting that they completely changed it over to this anime art style. And there's elements of Dawn of Sorrow. For example, there's a weapon crafting mechanic in

it. I just decided not to not really talk about that because I just don't think the weapon crafting mechanic is that interesting? It's a weapon crafting mechanic. Like you've seen a million of them before whereas this this change of art style Like that's really weird. Like that's a really interesting strange decision that a successful franchise would do That kind of gives you a bit of insight into like the way I would the way I approach it and I'm trying to be All encompassing with the detail but then also it's kind of always under the banner of is this interesting to talk about? Yeah you know That's a good example of it. It kind of sitting here thinking about it. Now. It kind of reminds me of the Legend of Zelda Wind Waker, which when it when it was revealed had such a Controversial reaction to the cel-shaded art style and now it's one of the most beloved visually striking Zelda games, you know in that set of diverse looking games. Zelda almost It's almost a part of Zelda to change the art style with every new iteration Which wasn't the thing for Castlevania. It always comes down to quality. I think at the end of the day Like personally, I'm a huge fan of the Wind Waker the art style because I just think it's really well executed You know, it's all this all pervasive style, but then also I feel like Art styles is very interesting because it has to It has to be in service of something. You know, it's no good having a really striking art style That's just completely divorced from your narrative or your gameplay You know, you couldn't make a devil may cry with Wind Waker aesthetics Even if they were the most incredible cel shaded graphics you've ever seen in your life. It just just doesn't work There's a thematic clash there and I think Wind Waker really works because it's it's slightly more light-hearted take on the Zelda world, you know, there's you have a family you have a little sister, you know You travel around these gorgeous as your seas speaking to fish. So the kind of Beautiful kind of cartoony look it suits it really well Whereas in Dawn of Sorrow is it's the complete opposite where you have this kind of more childish anime style But you have a story that's the most gruesome and intense thing you've ever seen in your life And these two things just don't don't mesh together in the slightest and to me That's the most interesting thing about Dawn of Sorrow this weird Tonal clash that that underpins the game especially in a series that is ostensibly Gothic horror for the most part when I believe this one was the portrait of ruin, but the the real villain in that game like has all these body parts come together toward the end and when you're back with the the anime childish art styles like this just feels weird. Like it doesn't connect, but if it was just-- - Yeah, there's a clash that just doesn't work. It's funny really, 'cause I've had a huge amount of comments from people saying, "Ah, like of course, like someone who hates anime, "talking rubbish about anime." And I'm like, "No, I love anime. "I just like good quality anime." - Right. - That's the difference. It just doesn't, there's lack of cohesion there, but-- - Absolutely. - It makes the story and the history of the franchise all the more interesting, and I think, to get kind of this little arc in the saga of Castlevania, when they go back to that more horror gothic art style in Ecclesia, it's, I think it's a triumphant return that strengthens that game. - Absolutely, yeah, absolutely. So it kind of brings that, that arc ends on a high note, not only because the gameplay's really cool, there's a crazy dope castle reveal toward the end of that game, but the art returned, and especially after two DS games in this anime art style. And I think that it brought your story to a high note right before we go back down kind of a darker, a sadder side of Castlevania, which had interesting, Man, it's just wild, man. The whole, everyone watched the video, it's so good. (laughing) - Thanks. Yeah, I think I always try and, I always like to talk about franchises that I feel have these ebbs and flows. You know, I get a lot of requests to talk about, you know, like Legend of, like Legend of Zelda is a good example. I get a lot of requests to talk about Legend of Zelda. And in a way, even though I love the series, I think it might make for a boring video because the quality is just so consistently high. So you're just constantly talking about games that are really, really interesting and high quality. You want some duds in there to kind of add some tone to the video. It's nice to have these peaks and valleys. I think it makes for a more interesting story. Really the lowest point would be those Philips CDI games. Yeah sure. Yeah. Which even then, I think if I were to talk about them, I think when it comes to the Philips CDI games, I think I probably wouldn't be too harsh on them, just because they're essentially responsible for an entire subculture of memes in themselves, which not every game can claim. They're kind of weird and interesting and bad, which is much preferable to boring and cynical and bad. Yes, I would totally agree

with that. Yeah, so it's a funny one really because I think, "Oh yeah, I'd love to talk about Zelda," but I'm like, "There needs to be some really bad games in there for me to desperately want to cover it." How did you tackle the edit for this? At seven hours and twenty minutes? That's no slouch. Yeah, the edit was tough, I'm not gonna lie. So I'm quite process driven when it comes to the edit, so I have all my footage before I start editing, I have my script done, and then I'll record it all, I'll edit the vocals, I'll put the footage in over the top, once that's all done I'll go back through, recheck it all, it's like a rough cut first, and then I'll clean it up, get transitions in and effects and stuff like that. And I kind of follow that strict process for every single video. I think if you just, if you approach it, scattergun, you've just got no hope of being able to finish in remotely a reasonable time frame. But yeah, it was hugely time consuming. And I would say that's probably the area where I was least enjoying myself, you know, just sitting at your computer for twelve hours a day editing is mind-numbing. Oh, it's gotta be grueling. Yeah. I notice there are parts you're talking about a point or a mechanic or a critique or something, and you know, you've got the game footage timed to just line up with what you're talking about, which to me shows a very thoroughness in understanding your collection of footage. As someone who's done a lot of, did a lot of guide work back in the, you know, a few years ago. Oh wow, yeah, you know exactly what it's like then. Yeah, you've gotta, you've gotta know where you were and what you were doing and, "I know I did this but where is it in this 12 hours of footage?" How do you just scroll and find? Were you tagging things? Like how do you remember, especially with 33 games, I mean my goodness. Yeah, yeah. It might be astounding to believe but I don't actually tag and timestamp things. Just because I feel like with 33 games, creating a system which you can use through time stamping, it would be as complex almost as making the video. So I kind of, I think the reality is that you come to know these games so intimately from making a video like this, that you can kind of know where certain things are. So for example, let's take, I don't know, like Castlevania 3 is a good example. Castlevania 3 is that I know, okay in this section I'm talking about the alley card playthrough. So, well I need to go to my footage which is my alley card playthrough. And that's not too hard, but you kind of get a sense of where certain things are in the games and you can quickly go and find the footage you need. It becomes a lot harder in modern games, I would say. For example, Lords of Shadow 1 and 2 took a lot longer than, say, Rondo of Blood, because the structure of your recording is much more complex than just a linear side scroller. Do you think that there's the difficulty there between 2D and 3D? Was Castlevania 64 and Legacy of Darkness similar to Lords of Shadow? - So weirdly they're not, because they're linear level based games. So it's quite clear where different parts of the game are taking place. So if you're talking about say the Nitro section of Castlevania 64, well, I know that my play through of Castlevania 64 is maybe five hours long. It's gonna be, that's about halfway through the game. It's gonna be, all my footage is gonna be around that point. That's not too hard. But yeah, in more, so for example, probably the most complex game I've ever had to edit is in my Lord of the Rings video, the Shadows of Mordor games, which are open world games. And they're obviously mission-based like Grand Theft Auto. So there's no actual linear progression through them. And that is a nightmare to edit because you have sort of 30 hours of footage and there's no - Where do you start? Yeah, exactly. There's no clear flags as to where certain content is and I think in those ones I have tried to make better make better notes to Make that a little easier because yeah, like that can be pretty pretty nightmarish by the end of my time doing guides for IGN I was working on games like Red Dead Redemption 2 and God of War and so by the end of those I was I had a journal next to me and I would write you know in this video This is what I did like I did this quest or I did so at least I could have some sort of Physical reference to be look at least not be totally lost in this footage Yeah, it's like the modern game modern open-world games especially. It's just you can't yeah You can't keep it all in your head. I think I think I'm helped a little bit by my taste in games I think I think that that makes it slightly easier, you know being more into Older games. I think you are Tending to deal with more linear experiences more often than not and that makes it a lot easier to kind of get your bearings With the game. Yeah, I'm kind of in awe of people who cover you put together, you know Put together a 10-hour video on an Elder Scrolls game. I would have no idea how to even

go about Organizing something like that because you know, you must be working with 120 hours of footage How can you ever condense that down into something watchable? That's a whole separate challenge. Yeah. Well, yeah for sure. I think that I think that helps me out You know, that's good tend to be more into those kinds of games and then they're not so bad You can you can learn them kind of easily. Well, I have to know how long was the export? (laughing) - And were you nervous hitting the button? - No, no, the export wasn't that bad. That took maybe two hours. - Okay, 1080p I guess helps. - Which was not that bad. Yeah, uploading it to YouTube, that was nightmarish. That was the most horrible element because it probably took about 10 hours to upload and then you have to wait while YouTube goes through all of its checks, you know what, it checks for copyrighted material. And that is a nightmare, believe me, because stuff that you think would trigger a copyright claim it can be triggered for all sorts of little things that you wouldn't even think. And yeah, that's the tense part. - Oh, geez, I can-- - But, yeah. Yeah, so that was, that process was maybe like a day, I would say. 'Cause I'm pretty sure, I don't know for sure, but I think it checks the video in real time. So I think if you upload a seven hour video, I think it takes about seven hours to check. Oh goodness. So that was very long and that was tense. Especially as I've been in the position before, I've uploaded a very long video only to find out that, you know, there's four seconds worth of copyright material, three hours into it. And I need to take the whole thing down and then-- - Redo it. - Re-edit it and take that section out or change it and then re-upload it. I think I've got a good handle on what triggers it and what doesn't now. Luckily with Castlevania, there was nothing in there, so it was okay. Good. Because you start, you lead off the video talking about how basically you're not going to talk about the music because of said copyright issues, which is unfortunate for, I think, the video in the series and the fact that YouTube and the automatic copyright stuff puts creators in that position because the music is vital to Castlevania. Matt>> It's a bit of a weird thing because I kind of... it's a shame that I have to do that. It's a shame that the copyright situation on YouTube is what it is where you can't just confidently show large sections of music. But at the same time I think I'm also not a musician and I think my language to discuss music is limited and I think pretending that it's not and trying to dive into these soundtracks in any sort of meaningful way is a little bit, not disingenuous is maybe a tad harsh but not potentially as interesting as other areas where I feel more confident to talk. And so it was a shame that I couldn't involve it as much. I involved the music as much, but at the same time, I don't think it really hurts the video at the same time because I just, yeah, I don't know. I don't think anyone looking to learn about the musicality of the soundtracks would be coming to me. You know, it's a funny one. I get a bit, you know, discussion about music in games is a funny one really, 'cause I think there are some channels out there that approach it from a real musician's point of view and they make incredible, incredible content. But I think there's also a lot of channels out there that talk about it just because they feel like they have to talk about it without necessarily knowing how to talk about it in a way that's interesting. You get a lot of the music is pulse pounding during the action and it's atmospheric during the inaction and it's like, well, no, of course it is. That's a given. Yeah, I feel like that a lot when on chapter select we try to discuss the music and the games and stuff when we can, when it stands out. And I'm not a super musically inclined person and sometimes I really don't have a lot to add to it and I feel like that sometimes. It's like, "Well, it was there. It existed. I didn't mind it." So that does happen to me on more occasions than that. It's fairly rare for me to contribute. Yeah, I think I've realised that's something I can't... that's not one of my strengths. I shouldn't lean into it. And thankfully there hasn't really been anybody who's been upset with the lack of discussion about the music, so I guess it was the right call. Good. I'm glad. I didn't miss it. I didn't think its absence impacted the video in a negative way. mostly I know Castlevania music is good. So yeah, yeah, it kind of goes goes without saying, doesn't it? Yeah, the soundtracks are great. They're really popular. And I don't never mention them, you know, when there's when they do get mentioned when you know, change a console means they could add whatever technology into it or a composer joins the team. You know, it does get mentioned, you just don't sit and say, Oh, this is the game that bloody tears came from and then play the track for, you know, 10 seconds because I think you're just playing with fire when you do that to be honest. The best, I

think the best example of the music that really also lent itself to your credibility of playing all the games was that music box puzzle in one of the Lord of Shadows games. Yes, that's a great moment. So for me, having never played those, you know, most of these games and specifically Lords of Shadow, it just would have been a puzzle to me. But hearing your joy of recognizing the song immediately because you had played so much, that said back to me as someone, like he really loves this game and these games. Obviously you made this video, but that was a moment of genuine, like a genuine moment that came through the video. Yeah, the exact kind of moments that we were talking about earlier, those authentic moments that you wouldn't be able to have that section in the video if you hadn't actually played through all of the games in order and slogged through all of them, you know? And yeah, I really like that moment. I think it's a nice moment of brevity in a kind of a sad section of the video. That's a really nice moment. It is. And you know it gives, specifically for that game, it also I think shows the passion of Mercury Steam at the time as well and like their understanding of the franchise as they tried to make something bold and new. Because with Castlevania it's easy to hear, you know, these games are bad, these games are good. Like it can be kind of just cut and dry, especially and just the shorthand on the internet, but there are genuinely great moments throughout even the worst of these Castlevania games, or something to be appreciated and gleaned from. I guess, I really, I was thinking of the mobile games or the multiplayer game on Xbox Live, but even there, there are gems and nuggets to take from those games, just execution in the end didn't pan out. I don't think I really hated any of the games in the franchise though. There was some that were more unforgiving to play. You know especially some of the more difficult earlier games. But then that's kind of to be expected as well. You kind of get yourself in the headspace where you're anticipating. You know okay? I'm gonna have to grind out this game to be able to get to the end, but yeah, I don't think any of them are awful really and that's kind of the way that I approach any of the games I cover on the channel. I kind of don't really. I don't really think that anyone ever sets out to make a bad game. I think people do. People are trying. People are passionate in the industry, you know. It's a very young industry as well. You know. It's not full of sort of grizzled old veterans who can't be bothered who are just phoning it in like it's made up of you know, young graduates straight out of university who were desperate to make their mark on the industry. And I think a lot of the time when bad games happen, it's, it's, there's usually more of an explanation to just, "Oh, the developers didn't know what they were doing." Mm-hmm. You know, sometimes that is the explanation, but there's usually a reason for that. Like, you know, the Castlevania Wii game, like, the team had absolutely no idea what they were doing, but that's because they had never made a game like that before, and they were dictated to make one. So, you know, they've kind of a lot of their mistakes make sense. Yeah, I always try and approach my videos from that perspective just because I think it's a you know, it's a more forgiving way to look at games. I also think it's slightly more enjoyable way to look at games. I'm really the kind of hyper negativity of the of the 2000s. I'm really I'm really not into when it comes to talking about talking about games. I think I think you get a lot more out of them. If you if you approach him with a bit more of a kinder eye. I would agree with that sentiment. So, you know after playing 33 games. What was your favorite Castlevania? Like what is what's your favorite? Yeah, I think my favorite is probably still my favorite. From before I made the video which is which is Aria of Sorrow on the Gameboy Advance. I think it's a I think it's a perfect game to be totally honest. I think the few flaws it has are very excusable and it just there's a really clever story. It is a really clever take on this sort of Symphony of the Night formula and yeah, I really really enjoy that game. I've always loved it. It's always been one of my favorite games and playing it again and writing about it was extremely enjoyable. I'd say that's still that's still top of the pile for me. Although there was a few that I hadn't played before that I very much enjoyed as well. Order of Ecclesia was one that I'd never played before and I absolutely loved playing through that. That's definitely gone up gone up to near the top and and Rondo of Blood as well. They the Japanese PC Engine game I'd never had a chance to play that before and I enjoyed that a huge amount. That game's awesome. I highly recommend that to anyone. It's an almost perfect 2D action game. There's so much more to it than you think there is, and it's

great fun. Yeah, it's a blast. I love Rondo of Blood. I hope Konami does the next, I would say, obvious step, which is to make a collection of the DS games. I don't know necessarily... I don't, I guess you would have to remove the tracing spell thing, you could just automatically have that happen like you played. I think it would be quite a lot of work though, because obviously the two screen element is quite baked into the design of those games, and so we wouldn't necessarily be talking about a port, we would be talking about sort of intrinsic elements of the game having to be redesigned. And I'm not sure that Konami are up for that. Because it would seem like an obvious thing to do, but Konami usually go for the easiest thing to do, rather than the obvious thing. They certainly do. Yeah. But who knows, they're making a Silent Hill 2 remake, there's Dead Cells DLC coming out, so who knows? Just days after you published the video, you know, they announced this Dead Cells Castlevania DLC. What did you think of that? How did that feel? Oh, I mean, it was good timing for the video. That's true! Suddenly, a lot of people are gonna be interested in Castlevania that weren't before. But kind of cynical view aside, I think it looks great. Like I'm excited to see that. I've not actually played massive amounts of Dead Cells, but what I have played, I very much enjoyed. I think Castlevania is a good fit for it, especially because it's kind of like a rogue-like Metroidvania, which I think would be very interesting for the Castlevania series to dive into. So yeah, I'm hoping it does really well. I love the series and I would like to see it, you know, back on top and anything that gets it a step further closer to that is I'm on board with. So I mean kind of following that train you just mentioned a little bit ago the Silent Hill 2 remake's coming out and they have actually a couple other Silent Hill games and I think there's a show or a movie in there too like Konami is trying Silent Hill again. Do you think Castlevania will eventually get back there? I mean the series has this pedigree. What do you think they'll do next to tap into it? So I think I've got a bit more of a cynical take on it just because I don't think Konami has actually changed all that much. What's happened is that the industry has become very, very, very remake centric in the last kind of two or three years and I think all they're doing is riding that next easy money train and I think some of the decisions they've made with, especially with Silent Hill 2 being outsourced to a western company to blue a team yeah I think I think it's it's unlikely that we'll ever see I don't believe internally developed Konami games from these franchises I think they could they'll be open to outsourcing games to Western studios for remakes and potentially small little new ones from smaller studios you know you see that with the Silent Hill F I think it's called I wouldn't be surprised if they if they take that route but I think a return to you know the Konami of old making their own games yeah is very unlikely and and I would be surprised if for example if remakes were to become pretty unpopular I think they would they would happily step away from that they're sort of following the money really rather than it being any kind of real passion for their franchises. Yeah, as someone who was assigned the guide for Metal Gear Survive, I'm fairly familiar with Konami's efforts post-Kojima and basically the last five to eight years, really, if you think about it. Konami just doesn't really have their heart into it unless it can make them money. And I think Castlevania is a particularly poor fit for that as well, which kind of puts it in the back of the line. You know, there's been a lot of rumors about like a Metal Gear Solid 1 remake, which I think is perfectly plausible. You know, I could see them licensing that game out to a studio to remake it. It's perfectly plausible and I think it would sell probably pretty well. And technically they already did that. Well, yeah, yeah, of course. Yeah, they did. Yeah, yeah. That's very true. Yeah, I actually talk about that in the Eternal Darkness video, and I go into Twin Snakes a little bit. I love Twin Snakes, I think it's awesome. Yeah, I kind of like it as well. It gets a harsh rap, but I kind of like it. It's kind of a goofy remake. It's not really like what you would expect from a Metal Gear Solid remake, but I like that. Yeah, mashing the mechanics of Metal Gear Solid 2 into one, which kind of breaks. Yeah, it doesn't work in the slightest. Right, it breaks the first game, but it's fun. Yeah, it's interesting. Yeah, it's interesting. The first person is just, yeah, it ruins the game. But in a fun way, not in a bad way. Yeah, I really like it. I would love to do a Metal Gear retrospective at some point, to be honest. That would also be a big one. Yeah, it would be, just because a lot of the games... the games I mean it's one of those series where the games get longer as the series goes on you know you end up with like you start Metal Gear Solid 1 I think is it's probably only like maybe eight hours long like it's not

super long like um and especially the the older MSX games they're even shorter um but then when you get onto like Peace Walker and Metal Gear Solid 5 they're absolutely huge they're like 40 hours long um so that's kind of what puts me off of that but i think that would be a very fun series to cover there's a lot of ebbs and flows with that oh they're definitely absent you even throw up in the castlevania video i think there's a little bit of metal gear solid acid i think yeah i do yeah i'm a big fan of acid i i love it i think it's a great game and What a weird game to exist. A flipping strategy card game. - And to get a sequel. - Yeah, what's that about? - Konami, Konami out here. Have you decided what your next project is going to be? Are you taking a breather? - Yeah. No, no, so I had a break for like a week maybe just because it was so intense getting it together. - Oh yeah. - The last two weeks were probably just grueling editing and checking and yeah, not messing up my sleep cycle and not having a haircut or shaving for ages. But so I actually got my life back in order once I released the video and had a little break. Especially because I really like to, one thing I'm really passionate about is, I really try to engage with all of the comments on my videos and I really, obviously when a video first comes out, that's when the biggest influx is. And I really try to engage with that. So I gave myself a little break and I really just spoke to people who commented on the video Which was really nice But no, I've actually already started the next video Some I'm some some of the way some of the way into it Is it have you said what it is? Is it a secret? I'm I can't no not really to be honest. So it's it's about the Panzer Dragoon series on the Sega Saturn and the video is really Similar format to any of my others every single game in the series but it's also sort of a pseudo history of the Sega Saturn as well and and by extension the the fall of Sega from their Position as the number one company in the world to you know out of the hardware business, right? And I I'm really enjoying working on it to be honest. It's it's that's another one of those videos I'd wanted to make for a really long time. So because it's because it's more niche I feel like you kind of you almost all obviously to earn the right to make it and I feel like the Castlevania videos done it's done well enough that I can go Yeah, I can I can hit him with something a bit more niche next good. I like it Are you so as a pseudo history of the Saturn you're gonna you're gonna throw in another mention of Castlevania symphony the night on the Saturn? You gonna throw that in there? Maybe, maybe I will. Just a little moment? Yeah, I haven't I haven't gotten to when that would have come out yet. But yeah, maybe I will just a little Easter egg for the Castlevania fans. It's a fascinating port of the game. It's definitely one of them. It is, yeah. It's a real mess, you know, in a lot of ways. But again, interesting. YouTube and its all-powerful algorithm had just thrown up the other day, too. I'll find it for the show notes, but I guess there was a port of symphony tonight on the tiger Tiger game.com which I think also kind of came out around your video. Yeah, it's the stop skeletons from fighting video. Yes Hold that old Derek did his did his video by yeah does I mean I love stop sellers from fighting and that's a great video as well about something which Shouldn't exist but does exist. Yeah, it's cool stuff See the history is there's still so much to learn even after Seven and a half hours of it. Yeah, exactly. Yeah. Yeah, exactly so My my last question actually is when my co-host and friend Logan wanted me to ask you So I mentioned earlier we do a show chapter select where we pick a series typically of games we've done our first season of a film franchise with fast and furious but We pick a series and kind of bounce back and forth through their entries and obviously when you start Any project that involves playing through a bunch of series? especially video games Castlevania is one on our short list of things we'd like to tackle someday and Initially in our quick just whip up of what would we do? How would we do it there? We were like, I will just we'll do a tailor-made list of maybe the 2d games, you know Or some of these 2d will just pick the good ones like we'll skip but after watching your video I've told Logan no we have to play way more than just these ones and so I'm he wanted to know as someone who has just played through all 33 of them you know would you recommend playing them all like you did or maybe skipping out some stuff like the Wii fighting game or as someone who has the experience what what What would you recommend doing? I mean, yeah, I mean, honestly, I do honestly believe that playing through every single game in a franchise, start to finish, does give you a very different perspective on it than just cherry picking different games to play. I think you'll come out with a very different appreciation for the franchise if you play all

of them as opposed to a handful of them or a slice of them. Would I recommend it? I mean you need to brace yourself if you're going to do it because it is a long process and some of them are flipping hard and hard in unfun ways I would say. You know Castlevania Chronicles on the PS1 and Adventure on the Gameboy, those are... my memories of them are not of enjoying myself, they are of resetting over and over and over and over and over again until I got the perfect run. But you will have... if you can get through that, it makes those peaks seem all the higher. I probably would recommend doing it, but yeah, you have to be kind of a little bit crazy to do it and know what you're getting yourself into. Well, he joked, he's like "I'm not trying to play Castlevania 64 in 2022 or whatever." I'm like "well, I don't know, that Legacy of Darkness game actually seemed like they fixed a lot of the problems." Legacy of Darkness is good fun, I enjoyed it a lot. It was a lot better than I thought it was gonna be. about Legacy of Darkness, is it you can play the other two campaigns in it or is it just the two new ones? I- that was one- No no, they're inside of it, yeah yeah. Okay, so it is the whole game. Yeah, it's a little bit weird though because the levels, some of the levels from Castlevania 64 aren't in Legacy of Darkness and some of them, so for example the Nitro section is not in Legacy of Darkness. - That sounds like a win. - Any of the campaigns. Yeah, for sure. But then it's a little bit weird, because then if you're playing through all of the games and you wanna experience the whole franchise, you definitely should experience the Nitro section in Castlevania 64. Like, the agony of it is quite an iconic Castlevania sequence. - Yeah. - So, yeah. You kind of should subject yourself to that. - Well, as someone who I think you and I like to play through games in a similar way, just kind of all of them in some former fashion. I appreciate it. Like we did a season on God of War and I desperately was trying to get Logan to play God of War Betrayal which was the only like Java mobile game that came out. I was like we have to play it. It's canonical. But he didn't, I couldn't convince him to do it. So we played everything else though. Even I draw the line at Java games. Well, if I could find a means to play it, I've given it a shot. So actually I was able to- I'll be honest, yeah. If they were more easily playable, I probably would have covered them. That's awesome. Well, thank you so much, Matt, for joining me on this episode. There's nothing left to do but to just let you tell the people where they can find you and all the stuff that you're working on, just whatever you'd like to share. Yeah, sure. So yeah, I mean, you can find me on YouTube. I finished a video game is the name of the channel. And yeah, if you like the sounds of extremely long and detailed part history, part narrative, part review series epics, then that's the place for you. Yeah, thanks. Thanks. Thanks for listening to me and thanks for having me on the show. Oh, of course, Matt. Thank you for sharing your time with me and just telling me about your process making this. Again, I loved the video. I highly recommend it to anyone listening to this. Matt has chapter markers and things. You can chunk it up by game, which makes it very digestible. But sometimes I just sat there for two hours and just watched as I was engrossed into this history and reviews and just learning about one of the industry's most iconic beloved franchises that also just didn't sell well. It's so fascinating, so I highly recommend it to anyone. Matt also has a Patreon for I Finished a Video Game. You can check that out as well. Links will be in the show notes. You can find my work over at maxfrequency.net in this show as well as on Chapter Select, which is wrapping up Season 4 right now on Fast and Furious, and Season 5 is getting ready to start soon, which is Resident Evil. So we're very very excited to be diving into those games as well. So thank you all for listening and until next time, adios! Oh, it was a blast. I saw a copy of one of the Panzer Dragoon games on Saturn. I don't know if there's only one or not, but I saw it at a local store. I think they were selling it for over \$2,000 or something. Yes, Panzer Dragoon Saga. Yes. But it was complete and I was like, "Oh, that's expensive." It is. Well, yeah, exactly. But the story behind that game and why it's so expensive is very interesting. Mm-hmm. And hopefully I'll get to be the one to tell that story. I love it. I love it. The, um... Oh, what was I gonna say? I had it. Oh! Since you're all in an emulation, which I totally respect, have you looked at the Mr. Project at all? Like the Mr. Console box thing? I think so. I built one a couple years ago and it's a little bit more expensive now because computer parts are still expensive thanks to COVID. But I mean playing them on your computer obviously is free but I think as someone who you play a lot of old games and I don't know how much you care about, you know, hard accuracy in the

emulation or not, but I think you would enjoy the Mr. in particular. Yeah, I have seen them before actually. I do have a lot of... so I've got like an analogue NT for example to play my Super Nintendo games on. And I've got a few ways of hooking up some of the old consoles that way. But I have looked at Amista before. I didn't recognize the name off the bat because it was a while ago, but yeah, I'm just looking at a video about them now. Yeah, I definitely recommend it. They looked pretty cool. It's dope man. And now the PlayStation Core is on there now, so you can play PlayStation 1 games in remarkable accuracy, so I would say... Yeah, I mean that does sound pretty good. It's, I would say it's worth it if you were looking for more ways to play old video games. Which I always am. We always are. Yeah, no this looks great, thanks for pointing me in this direction. So no Saturn on it, I don't think, it's not powerful enough for that, but. No, I mean that's okay. I think my, I'm not gonna delve too far into the Saturn outside of this video I think there's this niche and then there's you know, there's super niche. Yeah covering all the Sakura Wars games I just don't think yeah People will be as interested in that Could be a private thing secret