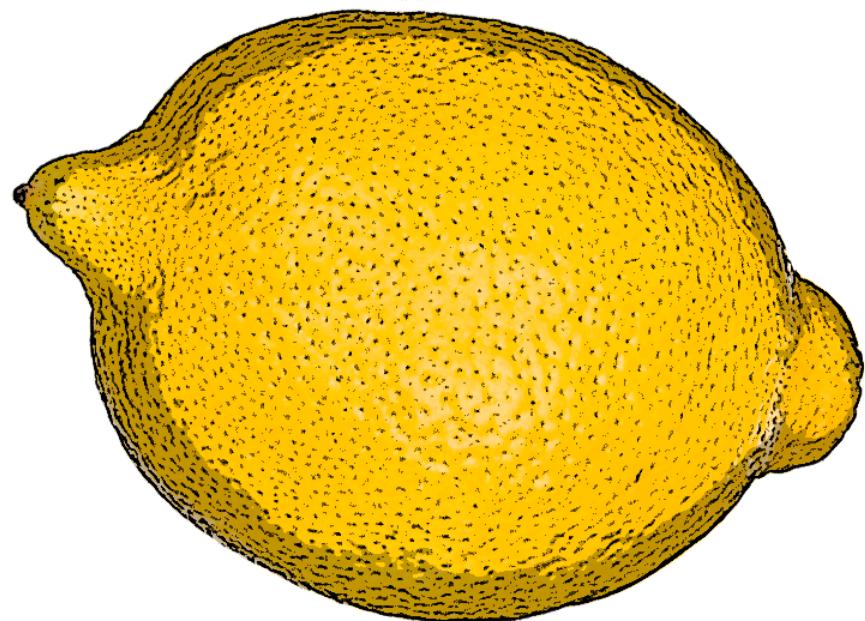
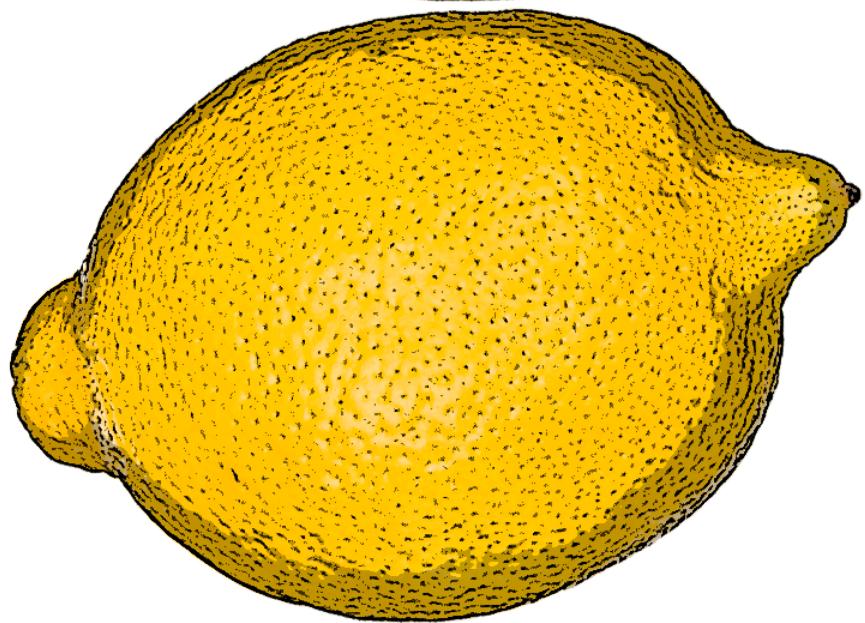
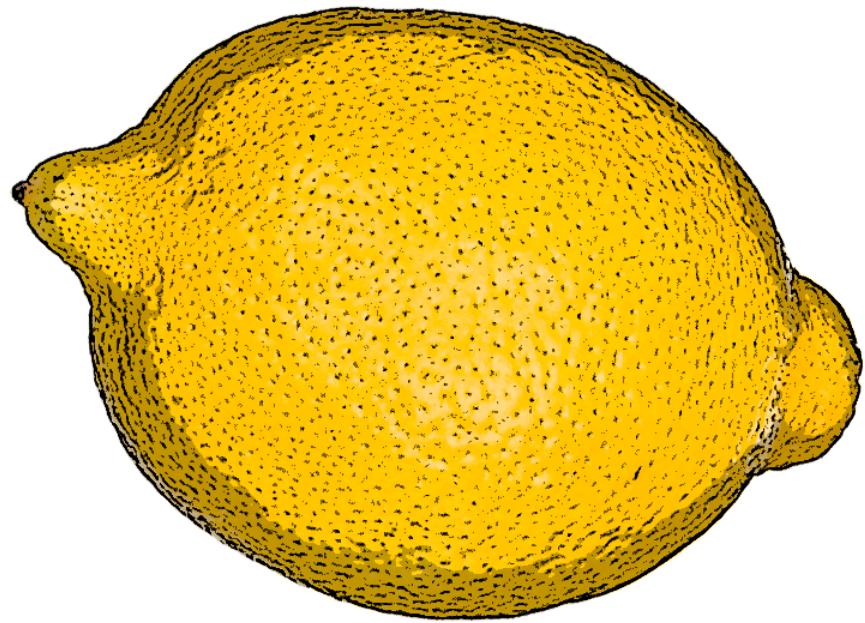


ALPHA-PYRROLIDINOPENTIOPHENONE ALPHA-PYRROLIDINOPENTIOPHENONE ALPHA-PYRROLIDINOPENTIOPHENONE ALPHA-PYRROLIDINOPENTIOPHE

THE LEMON
EVERYONE YOU KNOW
AND LOVE IS A

MASS MURDERER

AND SO ARE
YOU!

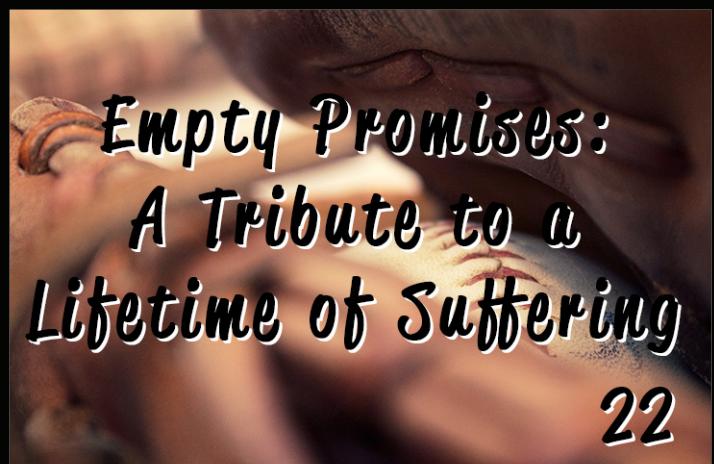
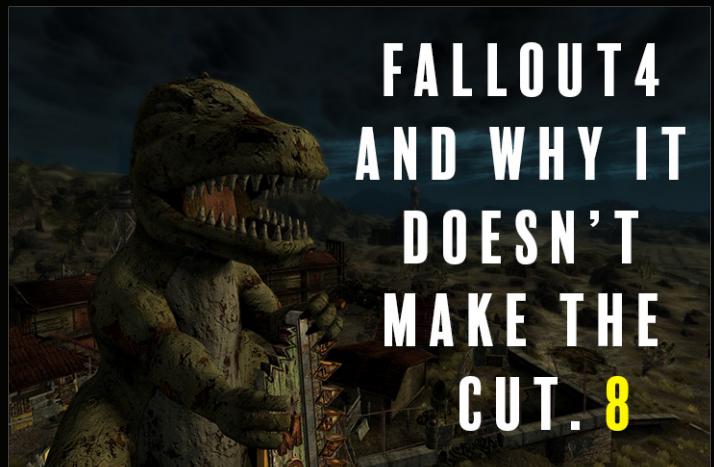


Letter From The Director

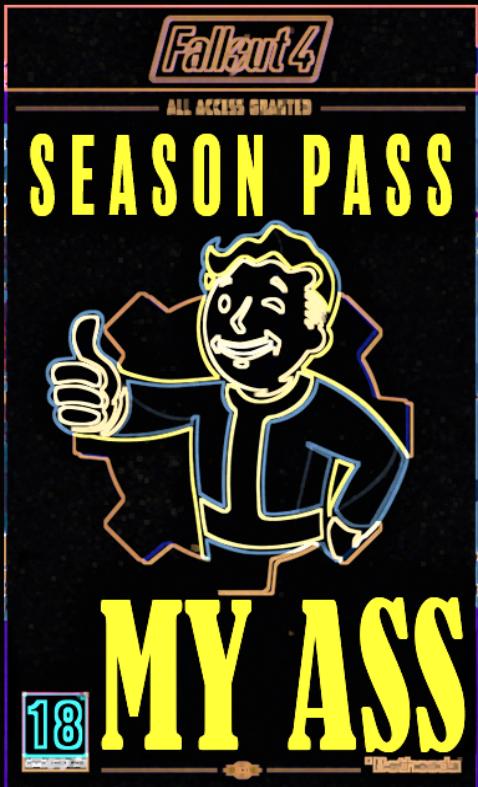
This magazine was conceived when friend Damian Gonzalez and I decided we needed an outlet for our creative thoughts. I was mulling over several names, The Possum, El Nopal. None but **The Lemon** rolled off my tongue. I pitched our slogan, **Bright Ideas, Sour Critics**, to my dear friend Katrina Newell and thankfully was met with support and a smile. So, here we are. A collection of **amateur and not so amateur writers** (a special thanks to Frank Lozano-Jaramillo for his outstanding contribution) coming together to bring you our thoughts and critical analysis. **Hot Damn I'm happy** to be apart of something like this. It took so long to finally produce **The Lemon** and get all the writers together. I may have lost friends along the way and I sure lost some sleep, **but we perservered**. I am thankful to my writers for not jumping ship when it seemed like this wasn't going to happen. Thank you for your interest in **The Lemon**. Stay sour and bright my dear friends and again thank you for everything.

- Chris Castillo, Mag Director









BY DAMIAN GONZALEZ

For the first issue, we must talk about a business practice that has become a standard in the gaming industry. Season passes and the idea of having post-launch downloadable content before the game is announced. I want to establish right now that I am guilty of purchasing season passes for games like Destiny, so I'm just as much part of the problem as everyone else that supports the practice with their wallets. I do not like the idea of having post-launch DLC before the game has been released. As a matter of fact, today marks the day that a trailer was released for Marvel vs Capcom Infinite, and I loved it.

The game looks promising; it has a great selection of characters and its minimalist style for the Heads-Up Display. We even got a release date for the game and immediately after they showed the date on screen, the next thing we got was an announcement

that Sigma from the Mega Man X series was going to be the first post-launch DLC character. Sigma would be the first DLC character available via the season pass for the new Marvel vs Capcom game, and I went from being super stoked for a brand new fighting game to feeling conflicted that I would have to purchase a season pass. I felt conflicted because Capcom is notorious for having disc-locked content that is hidden behind some sort of pay wall.

Another game that is coming out around the fall season that I'm excited for is Destiny 2 and I know that there is going to be a season pass for that game. The thing is I'm not sure if I want to pay that kind of money for the game knowing that at some point down the road there's going to be a better value for people jumping into the game. One great example of this is when they released the collector's edition for Destiny which was \$60 for the initial game and all the DLC up to that point, which was like maybe a \$100 worth of content. That is an amazing value for anybody who was interested in the game at that point, and being someone who had been supporting the game since launch I was salty. I was definitely salty that I had played the game when it was the definition of barebones and I had shelled out all of this cash and now someone could get everything I had for basically half the price.

Another game is one that I have invested so much money into and even more time than I care to admit. Killer Instinct for the Xbox One is a fighting game that revived the series when it released back in

2013 and is essentially Microsoft's flagship fighting game. Now this game didn't have a triple A budget like Destiny did, so when it launched they were trying a different business model. The system that was introduced was a platform system in which the game was free to download and people could invest as much money as they wanted.

What I mean by this is if you liked one character in the entire game then you could purchase that one character for \$5 and enjoy it with that single character as well as whatever free character was in rotation at that time. They also offered consumers two bundle options where for \$20 you would be given the characters with their basic costumes and no exclusive accessories for these costumes, while a \$40 bundle gave the player all the characters and both the original and retro for each of them as well as exclusive accessories to customize these characters as they saw fit. This \$40 bundle also allowed players to get earlier access to any characters that were coming out before the \$20 bundle had access.



Now I get it, this is one of those cases where you pay for what you get, I understand that, but they used this same platform for the next two seasons of content making that had that \$20 bundle turn into a \$60 value for 3 years/ season of content. That also turned that \$40 bundle into a \$120 value for all the little extras that came with them like early access and retro costumes. People understood what they were getting themselves into and they got what

they paid for. The thing that was interesting was at the end of this season 3, developers had announced a definitive edition for the game that had every single piece of content ever released as well as some exclusive media/ content would be released in both a physical copy and a digital copy. This definitive edition would be hitting store shelves for the retail price of \$40 and was the only way that consumers would have a complete physical copy of the game. I was conflicted about this because I love the game; that is why I gave them all my money as each season of content came out, but this was such a great value that I felt slightly burned. There were even exclusive costumes to this definitive edition that I wouldn't get unless I shelled out another \$40.

Being a huge fan of the game I would probably even need two physical copies of the definitive edition, so that I could open one for the exclusive content while keeping the other one sealed for a personal collection. Rather than dish that kind of money out, I just made the decision not to purchase it at the time, and as I

wrote this, I know for a fact that there has been at least one sale of the game where the definitive edition was being sold for about \$25. I am just surprised at how cheap it is now for someone to be able to get involved in the game and I'm probably more upset than I should be.

Look, I understand that making games now is expensive and things are usually rushed to hit deadlines, but I don't like this new standard. I get it when they want to release content for the players after they see that many copies were sold. It should be a way to say thank you to the players who are supporting them and continue to support them as they make content. Some games don't even ship out as completed content, and it doesn't let the players get the full experience. What I don't get is why are some developers taking content out of the game and setting it to the side to sell it as post launch content? The thing that's even worse is when the game can never be completed so people don't get the complete experience. A great example of this situation is Metal Gear Solid 5: The Phantom Pain.

This game was rushed and there were entire sections of the story that had to be cut out so that it could be shipped. They then placed some of the incomplete content in the collector's edition. Then their relationship with Hideo Kojima, who was the head honcho for the Metal Gear series, dissolved and he no longer had access to that intellectual property anymore! The only people that get screwed over from this kind of practice are the consumers and that's horrible.

The questions we must ask ourselves are, at what point is it going to take for publishers to change this business practice? Do we have to not buy the games? Do we have to not purchase DLC? Can the consumer even change it or are we sentenced to this continuous cycle of post launch DLC? At this point the only thing I know is that season passes and the norm of announcing post launch content should be banished to the deepest abyss.



FALLOUT 4 AND WHY IT DOESN'T MAKE THE CUT.

BY AMADOR HERNANDEZ

Let's look at Fallout 3 where the main goal is to find your father in a treacherous wasteland at a young age. The momentum of the storyline builds as one connects with the main character as they encounter new faces and strange groups. But Fallout 4 seems to have all this potential yet we only experience a game where it's the opposite situation. You're a father trying to find his son in a time very distant than the one he left. While playing this game I noticed the main story line seemed somewhat short and easy to finish. In fact, I would say 80% of my gameplay was going around the map for side quests because the main storyline

was a mission away and I was only a few hours into the game.

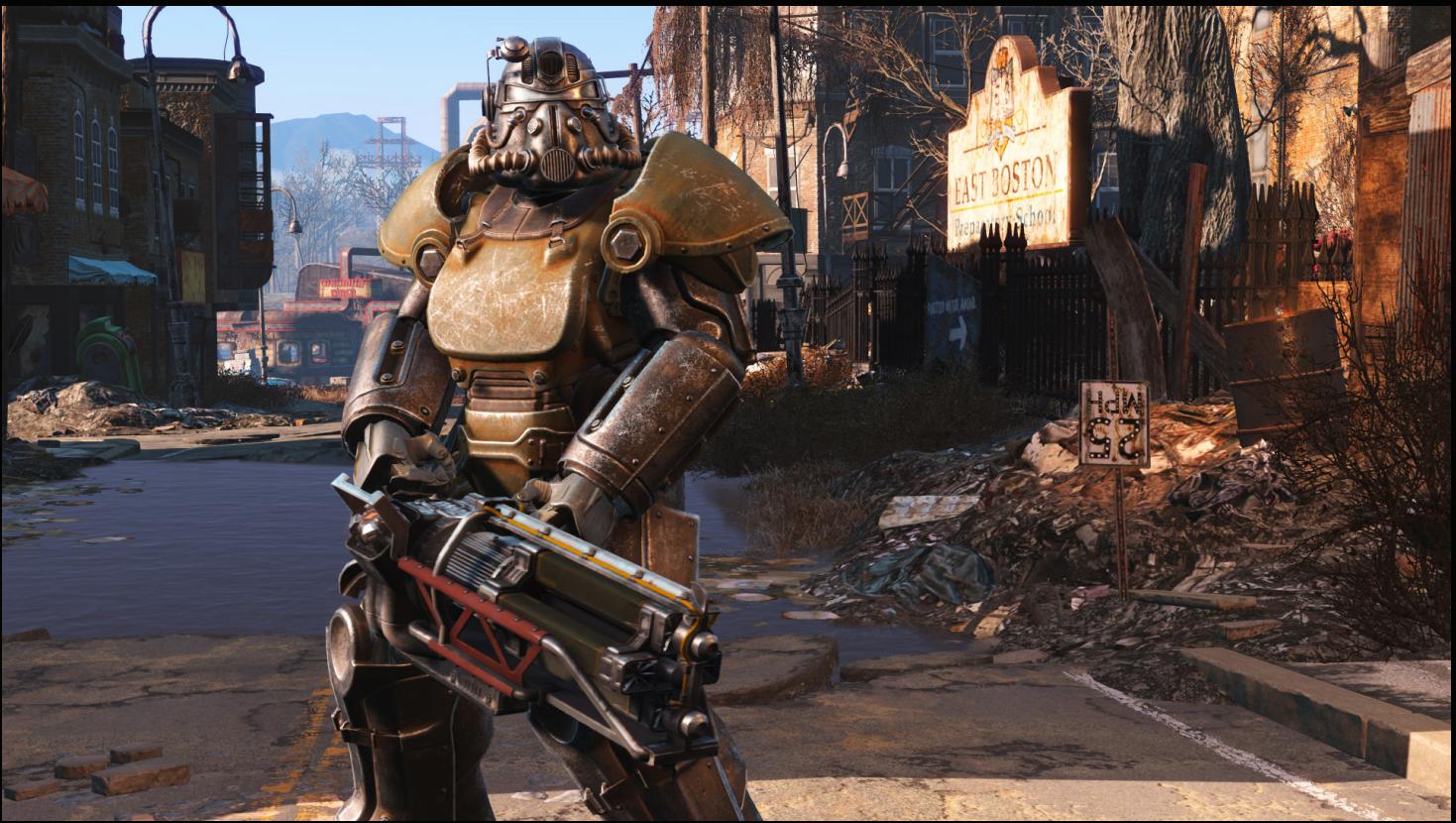
An example of a marvelous storyline is Fallout New Vegas. Now what some people don't know is that New Vegas was thrown into the public as a filler. Yet this is the game most referenced on reddit's /r/fallout subreddit. Its storyline was one to speak about for ages, and the characters backgrounds were so in depth, one could even say they were immersed in the game and actually experiencing the game first hand. Its only fault being a lack of graphics in that matched todays visuals but that seems to be the main pro for Fallout 4. Another main difference is the factions. In New Vegas you had the option to bring factions that otherwise would never work together, come as one unit against a common enemy, whereas in Fallout 4 it feels like you have to choose one sole side and when you do everyone else hates you.

Stems comments seem to be mainly negative despite the overall commentary being marked as mostly positive per Steam. Some on Steam report Fallout 4 really didn't cover all the bases.

"It's fun, but once you get through it, you'll never really want to come back. It has the looks, atmosphere, and sound of what could have been one of the best Fallout games yet, but it missed every other mark" Steam community member CrazyBubba said.

Comments like these pretty much summarize the game in a nutshell for most. Other comments suggest downloading the DLC's just to add more story to the game, but we all know DLC's shouldn't be there for the complete story but rather to give a little extra to the fans. In New Vegas, the DLC's were different story lines that didn't interfere with the actual storyline but could be really enjoyable





(depending on your character level.) Fallout 4 has a DLC for “Contraptions Workshop” for \$4.99. That’s it. No story behind this, just your basic add on to crafting.

But the comments can’t be all bad, right? Well I had to scroll a little to find a good one.

“Please, if you’re going to buy this game, which you should Play it on survival, even first thing especially first thing,” Shaushage said. Basically, they’re saying play it with a challenge to make it more interesting.

“Great Open World Game, with mods it is even better! You should definitely try it out,” QuanDemic said. Comments like these typically translate to “yeah the game is great but add stuff to make it fun and enjoyable.”

A positive to the game Fallout 4 is that you can enjoy “amazing” and “breathtaking graphics” with a

mere 8 gigs of ram. I had to buy a whole new computer for this game! This game overall had a significant lack of storyline and raw background in interesting stories from characters in the distant future. It missed allot of opportunities to make its characters more interesting or possibly failed to give more insight as to how life after the bomb dropped was even possible given that this is only a few hundred years from now.

Personally, the game has a lot to work in terms of its storyline but it was still enjoyable to play and I’d definitely try others.





HOW SAUSAGE PARTY IS A RELIGIOUS FILM

I know I'm late to the party, the Sausage Party that is, but I actually found the movie to be quite thought-provoking. From the previews, I thought it would just be a fun and silly hilarious movie with no context, but it was very deep. Beyond the crazy, homicidal jacked douche and the naked food cursing, having sex, and being completely shocking and hilarious animations, it is a fantastic movie about religion and the afterlife. It blew my mind the way John Milton's *Paradise Lost* did.

It could have been just an insane high vision of Seth Rogen's, but I found a lot of religious innuendo that made the movie a thought-provoking, satirical, masterpiece. Here's all the religious themes and ideas I found in this movie about R rated groceries:

The "Great Beyond" is grocery heaven where humans are Gods. But the food represents

humanity and the humans are the Gods humans believe exist. The two main characters, Frank Wienerton and Brenda Bunson, are the perfect religious couple. They were pure and "fresh." They even held off sex before marriage until their visit to the Great Beyond, only touching "tips."

Firewater, a stereotypical Native American character, says they were the original item on the aisle until the crackers came in and took over. Its playing with the notion that God has been whitewashed.
Some



They were inside of the package living by the rules to be loved and accepted and welcomed in by their God, which is what their existence is all about.

believe

God was black.

Some believe he was other things. But, the popular image of God is a white man because of the historical trope of European cultures molding native religions to conform to colonial doctrine.

There's food in the aisle that is pretty much immortal and do not expire and hang around in the back of the store. None of them believe in the God, they all know the truth. The Great Beyond is our own creation. The character Firewater, a non-perishable, later says he and a few others created the Great Beyond to get everyone's hopes up, because at first all the groceries screamed as they would be picked because they knew once they left the store, beyond was death and destruction and murder, aka the end. Those who suffered created God to cope. The non-perishables were different groups of oppressed. There is Mr. Grits, a foulmouthed, pot-smoking box of grits, a stereotypical Native American character named Fire water, and a Twinkie named Twink, whose name is a gay slang term.

They say over the fire that they created the God. I took it as they created this God to help cope through all the strife and pain they endured at the hands of the oppressor.

The image and beliefs of God has been remixed and molded to fit the beliefs and ideas of a person and their motives. The non-perishables then explain how they created this idea, but it was stolen and blown out of proportion by different groups. The different foods began to use different gods and different beliefs and ideas that fit their ideas and motives. They say God has been used to do horrible things, and people are often thinking they are doing things to impress God or use God as a justification. It talks about the Hitler food aisle and how he and his group hate the juice aisle (they are subtlety saying Jews). This ultimately led to a separation between the different people. God is a separation. People are separated by the different Gods they believe in and whether they believe in a God instead of all living peacefully together, they are at war over this idea. The hell is in heaven. The Great Beyond turns out to be hell. The groceries find out that this life beyond their everyday is not perfect and beautiful—it is dark and scary. They are killed and eaten, and the Gods do not care about them. Death is the end. They're destroyed and killed and their life ends there. There is

nothing after death in the movie.

The douche calls himself God, trying to assume the role of God. He killed, he controlled others, and created fear in others. (Are these characteristics of God?) I also loved the douche's name. It reminded me of The Douche on Parks and Rec, who may have played him because he was listed in the cast.

They portray God as a monster. They find out this image they have been believing in their whole life and trying to be accepted by turns out to be a monster who just uses them and disposes of them like trash in the end. They had high expectations for this image they guided their lives by, and it turned out to be a destructive disappointment. Their idol murders, controls, and mocks.

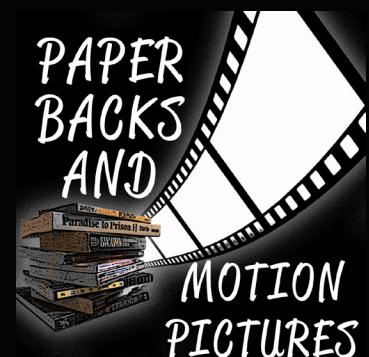
The hot dog with the slanted tip/head is like the

fallen angel, Satan, who was doomed to hell. He was the one who was picked on by all the other hot dogs, but he was the one who was "chosen" and almost "eaten" by the human/God. It's like he was Satan, a fallen angel who in the end leads a war against their Gods

and saves the groceries.

In the end, the groceries find their paradise is a place without God. They all live together happily and freely with no rules or judgement or expectations. And they don't realize it but they are probably going to expire a few days after the movie ends and meet their end, but they are not thinking about their fate, they are simply living. Life is just one big free and genderless orgy without God. They have one large orgy. One large, crazy food porno. The movie ultimately presents

religion and/or God as a construct we use to cope with our life and fate. Or, like they say at the end of the movie, "it's simply bullshit you can't explain."



EVERYONE YOU KNOW AND LOVE IS A MASS MURDERER... AND SO ARE YOU!

BY FRANK LOZANO-JARAMILLO

Part 1: Just Play It Cool And Act Like Peter Jennings

I can't handle the news on my feed. It's been pretty bad for a year, but the bullshit has reached some appalling new apex, and so now I'm making a lot of calls---but nobody I know knows where to score any Flakka.

It's disappointing. The prevalent hysteria currently portrays planet Earth as a dystopian netherworld where you can't take two steps outside your front door without being mercilessly pelted by cellophane baggies stuffed fat with dangerous powders, potentially lethal pills and capsules, sinister herbs from cursed lands...

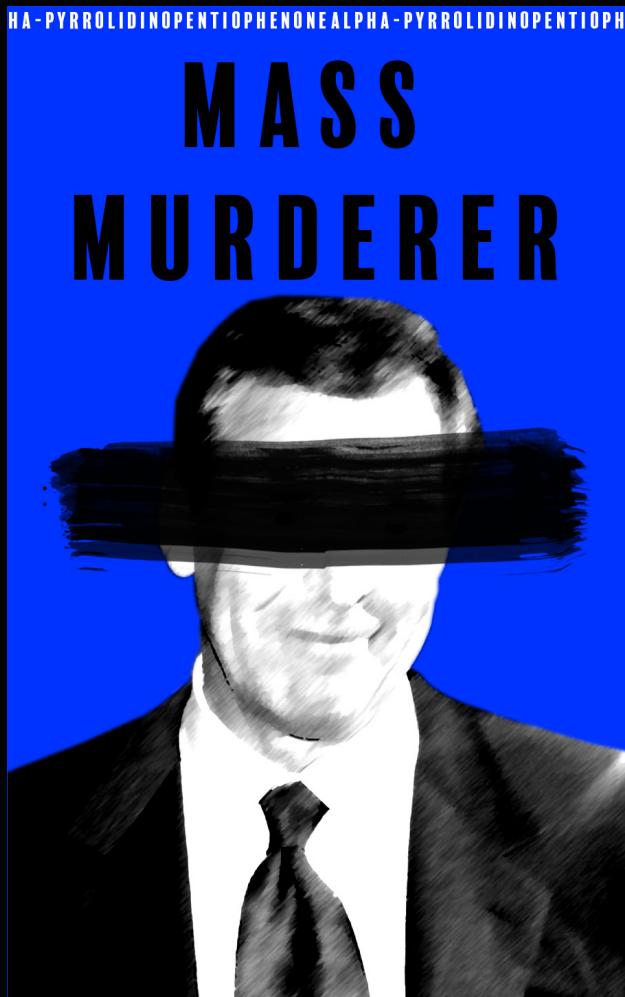
Yet, when the time arrives to get down and get funky? *Nothing*.

"*What makes you think I'd know where to get that kind of stuff anyway?*" One of my friends shouts to me over his phone. He's killing the engine on his riding lawnmower so he can get set to really lay into me for this obvious intrusion. "I mean, *it's not even, like, 10 in the morning for Christ's sake!*"

A notification chimes out. The headline on the feed reads: *DENNY'S FOOTAGE REVEALS LATINO STRANGLED BY OFF-DUTY POLICE---DEATH RULED A SUICIDE*.

"Don't give me that Sunday-school

song-and-dance, Greg---*I know you. You're a fucking arch criminal!* Just last week you plowed your Chevy all over my oleander set backing out of the driveway after the game, and *you totally ruined my front yard motif! All drunk as shit off my black market moonshine!*" Over the phone, It sounds like Greg's fumbling at the keys to his riding lawnmower to start it back up again, and then I hear a couple of loud dialing sounds as he lamely tries to hang up on me. "That's how it is? Driving under the influence and fuck up a man's hedge? But that's all groovy and legal, so long as you're on city council?"



Greg is still hastily trying to end the call when I hang up on him. Fucking poser.

I check my watch, and of course, Greg is right---it's quarter-of-ten in the morning. Second thoughts start to creep up---maybe I should be *texting* all my professional acquaintances to locate dangerous narcotics? Snapchat? Can I fit it all in 10 seconds? "*Dollars for Flakka. HMU*"

Just *thinking* it seems outrageous and "out of the question" from a legal standpoint, and my head

shakes reflexively, horrified at the foul idea as I press on, dialing the next person in my contact list.

“Harv, you fat sack of shit! How are ya! How’s Mirta?”

“Frank? Well, Goddamn! Hey, buddy! Long time no---”

“Yeah yeah yeah, cut the shit, baby---*Daddy’s trying to cop some zombie dust, you dig?* Where can a fella pick some up and how much is it gonna set me back?”

“Wha—oh, *hahahaha*---” Harv’s laugh is like a loud, grating jackhammer, which is bad enough, but then he starts choking on his quaking belly-laughs all of a sudden---like, *literally* choking---and so then I’m forced to sit there and listen to him producing all kinds of wet, racketty, hacking noises while I wait for him to recover. A notification rings out and I glance back at the news on my feed. Naturally, the news has gotten worse:

PROMINENT REPUBLICAN DISEMBOWELS ‘TIMES’ REPORTER ON LIVE BROADCAST, CLINCHES ELECTION VICTORY.

“Oh, Jesus---*are you fucking kidding me?*” I’m refreshing the page to get the swill off my screen and meanwhile Harv sounds like he’s performing the Heimlich on himself. “Harv? Harv! For the love of Christ, man! Get ahold of yourself! *Dial nine-one-one!*”

I can hear Mirta’s shrill voice in the background, wailing at Harv; her words are indecipherable, but her rapid-fire syllables burst out in a crazed, machine-gun assault that sounds like a hornet’s nest of judgment and persecution, so I hang up immediately. No use insinuating my tender person into the strange grinders of someone else’s marital bliss.

“You’re in good hands, you old cock-knocker,” I’m assuring Harv’s loving memory, scrolling up through my contacts again. “You’re a *God-damned survivor*.”

It’s a weird mix of panic and lust and greed I’m feeling as I continue on with another round of calls.

The truth is, I don’t even know if I would really have the sack to just shove my nose down into a chalky, rocky, yellow pile of maybe-drugs knowing that either *death* or *instant criminal insanity* would immediately ensue---*I just want to see if it’s real.* Is it just another Internet hoax? Some kind of new-wave “Blue Star” acid? An updated urban legend bugaboo for the Millennial set? If no one around can cop any real Flakka, *what is a reasonable person to believe?*

Most everybody thinks I’m kidding around when I call up, but I’m dead serious. They chuckle it off and offer me weed. “I got some ‘dro,” they tell me, giggling, sounding like they’ll be right over. But then other calls start to get weird. People I’ve known for years start talking to me in a lame, condescending way, really judgmental and off-putting. All of a sudden, some True Colors show up, and they start to boogie.

“Frankie, what do you want to mess around with *that stuff* for? It sounds pretty dangerous---I mean, didn’t you quit taking drugs a long time ago?”

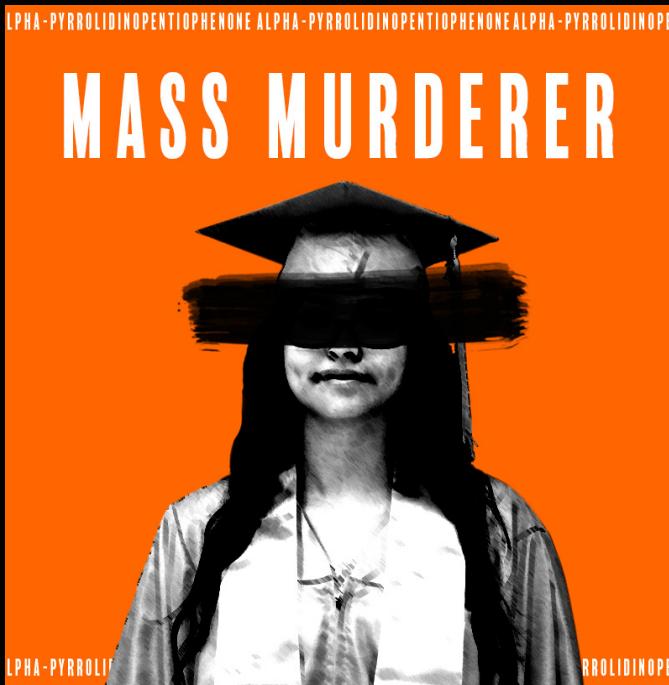
“Well, yeah. So?”

“And now you want to get high on this zombie stuff? What is this stuff called?”

“It’s called Flakka, Dad!” I’m telling him all smart-mouthed, getting annoyed at the hard time. “Everyone *cool* is doing it, and anyway it didn’t even *exist* back when I used to like to get funky!”

All at once, he launches into a stern lecture on how when he grew up it was all hard work and beatings, and how every Sunday everyone got down on their knees and praised God for just the *opportunity* to have such a shitty time and all that; but then luckily someone rings the doorbell to my house, and so I head him off at the pass, telling him that I’m groovy with Satan and that I’ve got to go.

I can hear another notification chiming up from the laptop behind me as I amble to the front door, and automatically I interrupt my step to turn around and check out the feed, but I catch myself and I wave it



off in disgust, continuing on to the front door.

“Fuck it, what could it be now *anyway*?” I’m muttering to myself. “PRESIDENT CONVICTED OF WAR CRIMES AND GENOCIDE---AWARDED \$500 BILLION, RENEWED FOR ANOTHER SEASON ON NBC? POLICE FIREBOMB HOUSING PROJECTS, BUDGET FOR UPCOMING FISCAL YEAR SECURED? FDA BANS CANCER CURE, DEEMS MEDICATION ‘AN IMPEDIMENT TO REVENUE?’”

I don’t even check to see who it is ringing the doorbell, I just throw open the door. I’m stunned to see Harv and Mirta there as they make no bones about rushing into the house with a pink-frosted cake and some weird-looking contraption that’s something out of a science kit. Mirta’s excited to show me how the device works, pulling me into the living room, indicating she and Harv confiscated it from Harv Jr. just the other night.

Turns out it’s a dab rig. Harv comes into the living room from the kitchen, licking some bright pink frosting from his thumb, seemingly unaware that a good portion of his goatee is coated in the stuff as he sits down eagerly to watch Mirta arrange all the components on the coffee table.

First, she feeds the weird pipe to Harv, who then sits in an instant catatonic daze that looks terrifying and hilarious at the same time. Some of the pink frosting from his moustache sticks to the pipe, and after Mirta pulls the pipe away from her lips, a bright pink ring of frosting residue circles her mouth. She tries to hand the pipe to me weakly, but I decline and she sinks back into the sofa, a blank mannequin.

It’s sort of disconcerting to sit there watching them look like the victims of carbon monoxide poisoning for this long, never-ending moment; but then the notification chime on my laptop rings out and they both snap out of it *totally*, all at once, laughing uncontrollably, as if someone hit a giant UNPAUSE

button and they suddenly snapped back to life. The news from the feed says: *COMET HURTLES TOWARD EARTH, MASS EXTINCTION EXPECTED IN FOUR DAYS*, and I’m strongly considering turning off my notifications. Harv and Mirta start making out on my sofa, but what starts out as light groping suddenly turns into the start of a fingerbang, so I excuse myself and head outside into the bright sunlight, thinking about pink frosting on wet lips, thinking about the malleability of truth, about the End Of Time, a Comet Sale, withdrawal slips, left-turn indicators, people I want to “Unfriend,” some vast and grand forgotten aspiration.

A scream happens inside the house, and then what sounds like weird laughter. I sigh and look out at



the tall palms swaying in the wind out there across the blinding air, hearing the rushing sound of the breeze through the fronds, feeling like maybe it was all a hoax all along.

Part 2: What Is And What Should Never Be

Everyone knows that the President of the United States is a lying sack of shit. The lecherous old fart is a hogballed jackass; nothing but the cowardly baboon-son of a wannabe racketeer; a two-bit hood manqué who never got the sack to get himself off the tit. But this doesn’t matter to his supporters. He has said it himself in one way or another many times over the last year: *“I could buttfuck the Virgin Mary on Pay-Per-View and skee all over The Christ Almighty, and*

every single one of you deadbeat losers would still vote for me.”

And why is that?

Because his rallying points are *really* what matter---Get Rid of the 3 M's: Muslims, Mexicans and Medicare. Of course, there's a lot more to his policy than flamboyant racism and outright cruelty; there's also the further selling off of the American middle class via unethical and decidedly unpatriotic trade deals with China; or the brutish gangsterism in his attempts to extort billions from NATO allies; or the forced erosion of our collective Constitutional rights under the banner of “Making America Great Again.”

And yet, these are all just *symptoms*.

The monumental flaw in the American

consciousness that validates these outrages is the *collective nationalistic egomania* that continually *dictates to the rest of the world* the terms and conditions to which everyone else must conform. *The world must abandon the metric system for us. The world must speak English for us. And the world had better do as we say. OR ELSE.*

We are the Ideal Bully. We invented “Native American Genocide.” We’ve robbed and looted Central and South America dry for over 100 years. We’ve been destroying Iraq for the last 30. **Between 175,000 and 196,000 Iraqi civilians have been killed as a result of American occupation since our second war with Iraq started in 2003. Almost 200,000.** How many Americans died in the World Trade Center attack in 2001? A few hundred shy of *three thousand*? That’s revenge *times 100*, which might impress a bully if it weren’t for the fact that Iraq had *nothing to do with the September 11 attacks*, as finally admitted by the GOP in 2015, blaming the genocidal travesty on “intelligence failures.” Intelligence failures, indeed.

As it turns out, bullies are afforded the luxury of an apparently *infinite* allotment of intelligence failures. *200,000 over the course of fourteen years? Ah,*

It's all in a day's work. We already made our nut, so if Elizabeth Warren wants to bitch, let the old gash knock herself out.. Fuck the doomed and apologize at the press conference later--permission constitutes a challenge against my rightful entitlements already..

Of course---being the Ideal Bully---one thing we will *not* tolerate is *being bullied*. Unless defending ourselves calls for **actual** balls. Then the simian law of attacking a weaker party and inviting the aggressor to join in on the attack gets hastily thrust into play---as illustrated in 2001, when Saudi Arabia financed 9/11 and---instead of confronting the mighty Arab oil demigods head-on, like the bold and iconic hero of our own delusional self-image---the United States instead singled out Iraq as the patsy and then

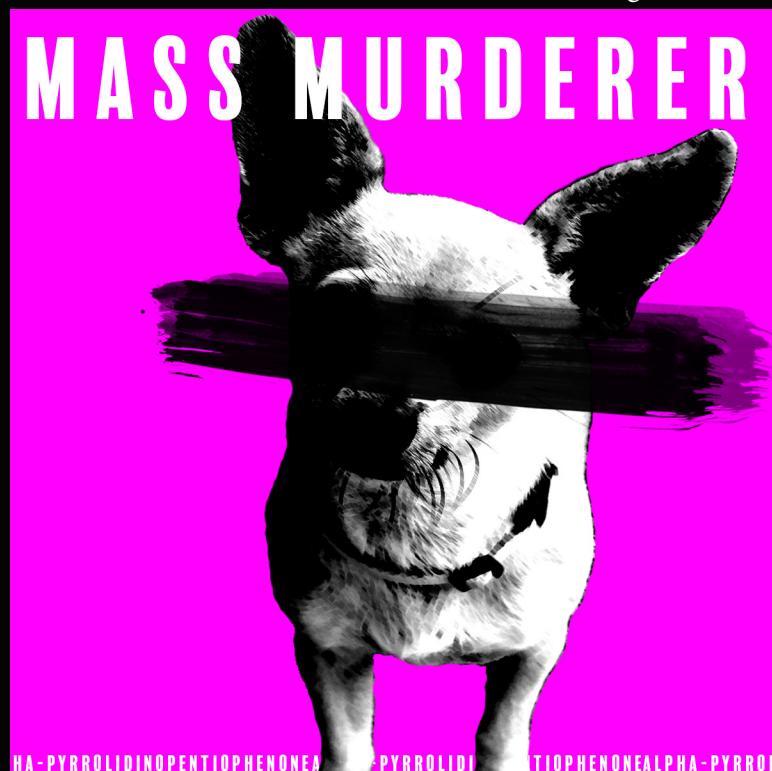
proceeded to embark on an incineration campaign that continues to this day.

It’s arousing to think of someone randomly perusing this story and randomly allowing their eyes to fall on the above paragraph. One can imagine the screeches of disapproval, like the squeal of hotdogs on the grill: *This is an outrage! Did you just call the United States a self-delusional and cowardly baboon?*

Yeah, I fucking did! Why? Are you all set and ready

to scan the room for the nearest inflatable wimp and invite me to go kick some ass?

Because that’s precisely what’s going on now, in this baffling and destructive farce we’ve grown to accept as *foreign policy*: The Saudis bankroll the bulk of what Americans know as “global terrorism”---*but because the financial prosperity of The United States is fatefully intertwined with that of Saudi Arabia*, the Saudis are termed what is known in the industry as “untouchable.” And that is the *great victory* in convincing the masses that “Radical Islamic Terrorism” is The Name We Dare Not Speak: Nationalists tout it as *tough-talk* and *no-nonsense* because they claim it does away with P.C. courtesies and “names the guilty”



---but the lot of it is bullshit, because the term actually *broadens the possible scope of suspects* (by pointing the finger at an *entire religious ideology*) rather than narrowing it down to those who are actually culpable---like, let's say, the Monarchy of a single identified nation that wears suicide-bomber victims like gleamingmedals on a chest rocky with a coal soul, slick and foul with crude.

But all the bravest Americans love their slogans, perched in front of their mobile devices in an air-conditioned world, inhaling Wal-Mart sodas, sizzling and beaming with solipsistic pride at the superhuman ability to transform glitzy ignorance into 140 characters or less. Meanwhile, a little bit of every Starbucks macchiato or the Sprint bill or gas for the car goes back into bringing home Johnny-without-any-legs-or-arms and leaving behind kids ripped apart by our overpriced but cleverly-financed top-of-the-line military hardware.

As taxpaying Americans, we've all settled comfortably into showing Charles Manson a thing or two about mass murder.

Part 3: Sacrelicious Zombiegasm 2017 And The End Of The World

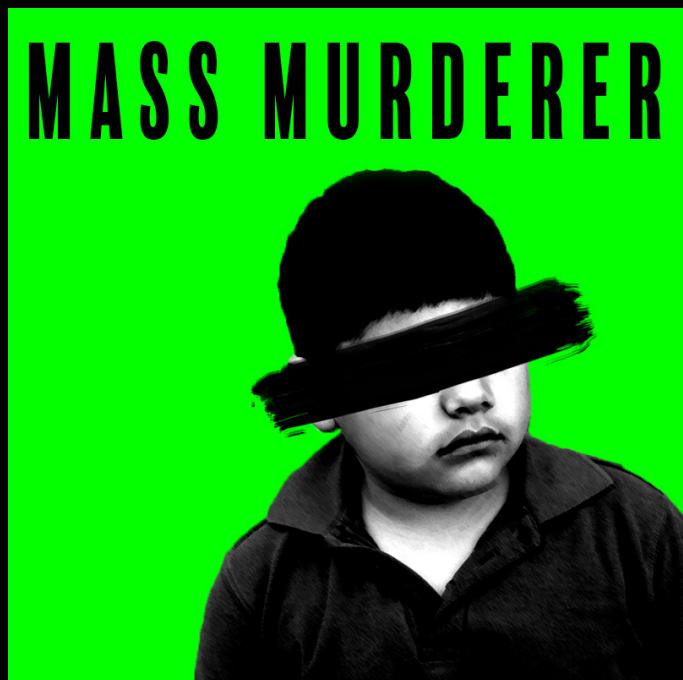
Harv looks passed out, but Mirta jumps out from out of nowhere and drags me back to the sofa, where she pushes the dab rig into my face, pushing a button that ejects this weird-looking pink smoke into my mouth, and I accidentally huff some of it, inhale it, even though I don't really want to. Suddenly, a feeling like goosebumps on the outside of my body starts spreading to the *inside* of my body, around my organs, turning them into icy scales, like glass snakeskin spreading all around dark fibers inside of me.

All at once I notice the SPECIAL REPORT on CNN because the television's so loud, and what looks like the end of the world is going on: Citizens rising up and revolting; congressmen are drawn-and-quartered with commandeered city utility vehicles, their bones and tendons and intestines strewn across the impossibly green grass of the capitol lawn; bankers are nailed to hot asphalt streets in neat rows as homeless children are directed to drive the large drums of city steam rollers over their skulls, explosions of bone and brain-matter quickly boil and evaporate across the hot cylindrical metal, rising up as thick steam; pederasts and pedophiles alike are ripped from their collars and vestments and impaled one after another on flagpoles

so that their heads pop right off, like so many Thanksgiving turkeys on an impossible technicolored dream-spit.

Mirta points at the blue ticker at the bottom of the screen that reads: ANTICIPATING THE METEOR COLLISION WITH EARTH, MILLIONS GATHER IN CAPITOLS ACROSS THE GLOBE, DISMANTLING STANDING GOVERNMENTS AROUND THE WORLD---LAWLESSNESS AND REVOLT OVERTAKE MARTIAL LAW...

"Let's go to Austin!" Mirta's hissing at me, pressing the button to feed me more of the pink smoke. "This Flakka's got me wanting to make a difference!"



"Flakka?" I'm incredulous, looking at the backs of my hands instinctively---my big blue veins bubble and contract impossibly, forcing my blood along in bright, sharp rushes that I can feel in my lips, in my scalp. Mirta's got heavy red bags under her bloodshot eyes, and she's forty-something, you know, around my age, but she looks *hot*. I want to bite into her throat and eat the goodies inside of her head all of a sudden.

"My Harv Jr.'s a rascal, isn't he?" Mirta's nodding maniacally, looking at me to consult with me, making sure I agree. "Drugs are bad."

Harv Sr. has lost some blood because of Mirta's bites, but a couple of hits from the rig and he's up on his feet, a big grimacing grin stretched out on his face as pink flecks of leftover frosting flake off of his goatee, fall around his quickly stepping feet.

We have to snatch a couple victims on the way out of town to keep us off of each other, but by the time

we reach the Sarita Border Patrol Checkpoint we're all starving, so instead of answering the Agent when he steps forward to ask if she's a U.S. citizen, Mirta lunges out of the car window like a jungle cat and snaps the Agent's head all the way around backwards with her bare hands, gnawing through his neck and his veins and tendons so that it's clean off his body in a matter of seconds.

Cowering Agents---all grown men---wail and scream at the sight, and the German Shepard sniffer dogs dodge us and howl in terror as they flee the scene. Harv and I pounce on the few remaining Agents at the station---a lot of them have abandoned their posts to return home to family, apparently---but the scrawny ones left behind are just enough to quell the hunger, and before long, we blast down the road again, picking our teeth as we move into the beautiful sunshine, off to assist in the redesign of society as we know it.

But when we get to Austin, the show's all over.

The rogue meteor, number NA34-08921, which had indeed been headed on a dead-on collision course with planet Earth simply burst into a cloud of rapidly dispersing fragments, soon to melt in the searing rays of the Sun.

Tattered random pieces of business suits are scattered like debris from a tornado all across town. A lot of these fragments still have body parts in them, drying in the sun like fish picked clean by gulls, evidence of the arrival and departure of some vast purge, an event so violent and substantial that nothing

could ever possibly be the same again.

Faces emerge from the shadows into the sunlight, sensing somehow that the violence has ceased to be, once and for all. A great wave of relief sustains a joyful celebration that turns into an ecstatic renaissance of new ideas and technology. Oil wells are capped as the solar panels and windmill fans spring up like daisies and bluebonnets and snapdragons across the verdant landscape, swaying and mingling together in the breeze, forming one long, continuous mélange of colors and textures that move in gentle and unified undulation of rhythm and harmony, enveloping the entire planet, enshrouding it, protecting it.

And then, absent notifications, a beginning.



MASS MURDERERS



The Healing, The Loving, and The Exceptions



By Cindy Karina Cano

A popular book flying off the bookshelves lately and appearing in everyone's Instagram posts is Milk and Honey by Rupi Kaur, which is a collection of poems on hurting, acceptance, and recovery. Other authors such as Nayyirah Waheed have written similar poetry collections, such as Salt, that deal with the same self-compassionate message. Due to the increasing number of book sales and the large amount of people quoting their work, it's important to note what power positive writing has and why their poetry may not be for everyone.

The idea of positive thinking to combat the negativity is one that has been floating around for a while. From simple "it's I can, not I can't!" to "stay positive," this method has been recommended in various occasions to combat negativity. The issue, of course, is that someone can't simply "stay positive" or "today choose happiness." In theory, yes, choosing happiness and staying positive are excellent ways to combat mental illnesses

such as depression and anxiety, but the solution is more complex than mere commands.

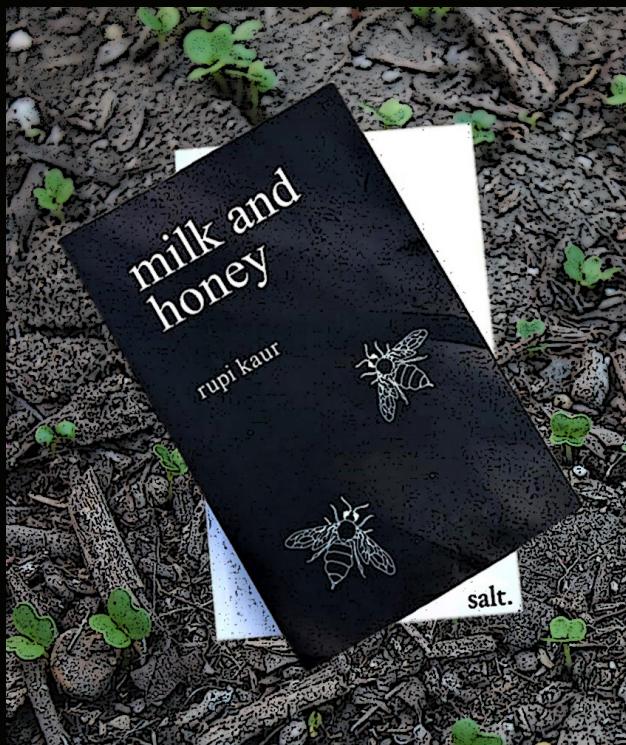
That is why books like Milk and Honey and Salt are necessary. The complexity that is recovery isn't obtained with a few simple words and a sudden change of mind. It is a long journey with relapse and suffering and hard work. The words included in their poetry help boost the mentality of gentle recovery; the idea that you should stay positive and make progress but acknowledge that you won't always will--and that's okay. The gentle treatment of setbacks and the

practice of self-care allows the individual to recover in a way that isn't too demanding or unrealistic.

Rupi Kaur writes:

it is a part of the
human experience to feel pain
do not be afraid
open yourself to it

While, "it's okay to not be okay," aids in not being self-critical, it can do more harm than good if an individual does not digest it correctly. At times, it can have the opposite effect if assumed someone can stay in his or her depressed state, not looking for a way out. This in turn feeds their mental illness, making them believe that there is no need to reach out for help. This, of course, is not at all what the phrase means, but is instead a confirmation that during the road to recovery an one should not be self-critical of himself or herself. They should acknowledge the progress they've made, no matter how small. They must be gentle with their shortcomings in an attempt to move forward despite of them.



Another mentality this type of poetry encourages is the fact that you should not depend on someone else's love, but rather your own. This has good and bad undertones. A primary trait associated with mental illness is the concern for other people's judgments or the constant need for the love and acceptance of another person. Here's where positive thinking comes in as Waheed addresses:



if someone
does not want me
it is not the end of the world.
but
if i do not want me.
the world is nothing but endings.

While this is supposed to convey the idea of self-love being the most important, some individuals could possibly feel worse from the fact that they may not currently be at that level and therefore have "nothing but endings."

The self-love doctrine that is portrayed in their poems is appealing due to the fact that the authors are women of color. Rupi Kaur was born to Indian parents while Nayyirah Waheed is of African descent. Their backgrounds allow both writers to urge readers towards self-love in regards to race and ethnicity as well as gender, promoting the acceptance of various identities. Rupi Kaur discusses the influences of her background in the writing style itself. Kaur shares,

"i'll only use lowercase and periods—a characteristic of my mother tongue (punjabi written in gurmukhi script). i am not east or west. i am two worlds trapped in one." Besides writing style, their identities can also be seen in the poems themselves. Waheed's poem displays

the importance of appreciating your race as she writes:

black women breathe flowers, too.

just because

we are taught to grow them in the lining of our quiet (our grandmothers secret).

does not mean

we do not shelter with wild tenderness.

we soft swim.

we petal.

we scent limbs.

love.

we just have been too long a garden for sharp and deadly teeth.

so we

have grown

ourselves

into

greenhouses.

Kaur does something similar in regards to femininity:

the next time he
points out the
hair on your legs
is growing back remind
that boy your body
is not his home
he is a guest
warn him to
never outstep
his welcome
again



The problem is that it doesn't end there. Rupi Kaur and Nayyirah Waheed at times express negative sentiments towards men and the white race. This is due to the fact that Rupi Kaur mentions her rape while Nayyirah Waheed sprinkles her writing with criticisms of white supremacy. While it is understood the amount of oppression, hurt, and anger that resides in minorities and victims are the cause for these words, it should still be noted that these are not ideal books for every one. Mental illness doesn't know race, gender, ethnicity, moral background, economic level; it simply attacks as it pleases. But, this still doesn't erase the fact that it's harder for some to receive the same mental care as their counterparts. At times this can be a problem, especially when there are mental issues present in individuals, regardless of their privilege, that need attention; a simple example being cases where men are not allowed to express their emotions or even admit to having a mental illness.

Regardless of whether you relate to Kaur or Waheed, it's important to note the significance of surrounding yourself in positive affirmations as often as possible. If someone sticks to the same pair of words over their lifetime, the effect has the possibility of dwindling. Or if an individual sticks to a small collection of positivity, the limit of options result in not being able to fit a situation where other phrases would

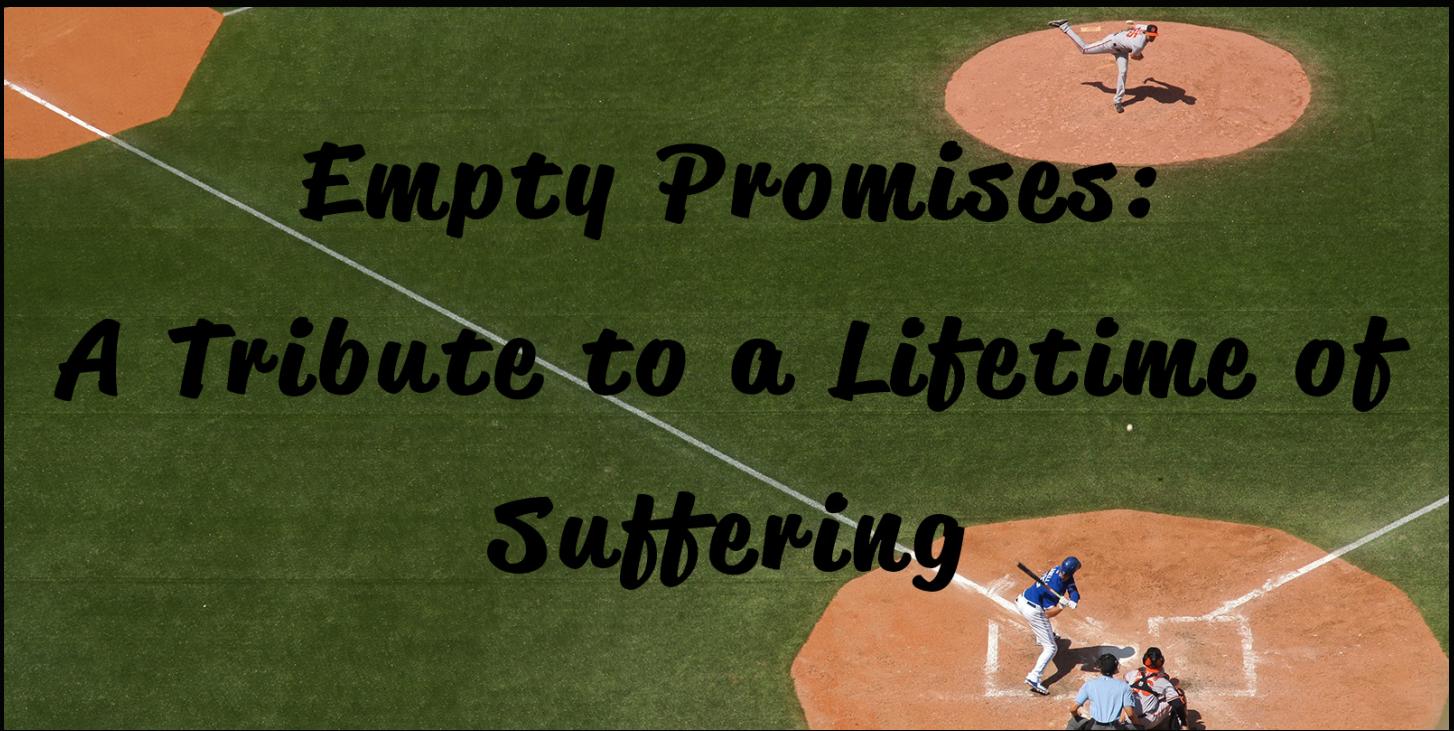
have helped. While it's not mandatory to practice positivity and self-love every day, a constant exposure to them can make a difference.

Poetry by Rupi Kaur and Nayyirah Waheed aren't the only forms of positivity. There are plenty of other authors and books that provide the same experience; the importance is in finding them. Even if you only purchased Milk and Honey after seeing it everywhere (which, again, is perfectly okay!), don't allow that to be your only source. Look into other poetry, anything that will help you, even if it's not an entire collection and just one poem. If the melodic words written in poetry aren't appealing, look into stories, prose, and novels themselves. If written word doesn't suit you, listen to slam poetry. And of course if that's still not appealing, listen to motivational speeches. The point being, it is not sensible to debunk the method of positive thinking without even trying, especially since there are various mediums of positivity. But if "thinking positive" isn't a match, at least remember that it's okay to not always be okay, and it's okay if it takes days or months or years to feel better. In Nayyirah Waheed's words:

it is being honest
about
my pain
that makes me invincible.







Empty Promises: A Tribute to a Lifetime of Suffering

By Nathaniel Puente

The month of April features some very neat things: April showers attract some exquisite vegetation for the remaining spring months, cannabis enthusiasts enjoy their national holiday, and the Major League Baseball season gets its regular season underway.

For many Americans, the start of the baseball season is a start of new hope. The grass is freshly cut, the players are all healthy, and all teams start off with the same record of 0-0. Opening day is one of the most anticipated of the year for sports fans. It solidifies the start of something new and every fan is sure that their team has what it takes to get to the promise land, the World Series.

I am an avid baseball fan. I try to watch all 162 of my Texas Rangers' games. There are very few things I enjoy more than watching these athletes give it their all every day. These baseball games mean more to me than a simple pastime, and surely I am not alone. Every year, millions of fans crowd themselves into tiny arenas to watch duels take place while many more sit glued to their television sets in the comfort of their home.

Why do we do it? It is hard to pinpoint that exactly. I enjoy the learning aspect to it. I like learning every player's name, every World Series winner, every time a batter has sneezed, etc. It is a passion and a hobby. This stems from my passionate personality. If you do not believe my obsessional behavior, ask me to name every Iron Maiden song and you will quickly change your mind. If I love something, I go far beyond

to find out everything about it. That's just who I am. As for other fans who are not the number junkies that I am, it could be a way to express their emotions. Sports are a great way to let out your tears when your favorite team wins or loses the big game. My father, hides his emotions most of the time, but will scream and cry at the TV every Sunday that our beloved Dallas Cowboys are letting us down. It is also a way of bonding between father and son that is found in rarely any other activities. The female fans, who make up a larger percentage of sports fan bases than people realize, adore the games for the same reasons. I cannot personally speak for them, but their passion for the hobby is just the same. I have met many female sports fans who share the same love for the game as I do and it is a refreshing take.

In my above incoherent ranting about how and why we love sports, I failed to mention any actual sports knowledge. If you like off-topic sports coverage you should check out my sports show on UTRGV Radio, "13th Take". That's a shameless plug I know, but you have to do what you have to do you know.

If you are not a baseball fan, you may have been thrown off by something I mentioned earlier: "162 of my Texas Rangers' games." One-hundred sixty-two games! That is a lot of baseball games. What is in those 162 games? It is tough to say; it is a giant mash of walk-off homeruns, line-drive base hits, errors, strikeouts, sacrifice bunts, controversial calls, upset



managers, diving catches, unfair umpires, balks, and a slew of other terms only used during this quirky game. Lucky fans will see their team advance to the post-season in early October for a chance to push their way to the World Series, the best of seven that determines the year's champion and league supremacy.

Lucky fans will see their team play in and even win the coveted Commissioner's Trophy when it is all said and done in late October/early November.

Unfortunately for many, and coincidentally fortunately for others, these lucky fans who see their favorite teams win so often are usually a select bunch who have dealt the chips right and win seemingly year after year. The recent history of baseball has curbed this trend of dynasties a tad, but it still exists. The New York Yankees famously have won 27 World Series, while playing in 40, and lead American sports as the most successful franchise in history. Although the Yankees lead by an exceptional margin, there are other prosperous teams with a plethora of World Series wins and

appearances while other franchises lay almost flat in the dust; the St. Louis Cardinals have 11, Oakland A's have 9, and the San Francisco Giants and Boston Red Sox each have 8. These teams, except for the Red Sox, have appeared in at least 15 World Series. Meanwhile, of the 30 MLB teams, there are 8 teams who have never won a World Series, there are 8 more who have won 2 or less. Sixteen teams in Major League Baseball have won two World Series or less. That is over half of the league! How can year in year out these teams continuously lose? You would think that with 162 games every year that something would click together and a team would be able to find some lucky pot of gold

to give their fans something to cheer about. But no, these same teams disappoint their fans every year and give no grimace of hope whatsoever yet they continue to watch. Why can these teams not win? It is hard to answer exactly; it is a combination of stingy owners, geography, luck, and the sheer chagrin of the baseball gods. Sadly, my Texas Rangers are a part of the distinct bunch to have never won a World Series.

The Texas Rangers were formed in 1961 as the Washington Senators. They played their games at District of Columbia/Robert F. Kennedy Stadium where they became infamous for their futility. They stayed in Washington DC for 10 years where they amassed one winning season and an average of 90 losses a season.



EVERY YEAR WE ARE SADLY DISAPPOINTED AS OUR TEAMS FAIL TO REACH THE PROMISE LAND.

The team was relocated to Arlington, Texas for the 1972 season and renamed the Texas Rangers. The team's mediocrity followed along with the move. The team only had one winning season in their first 5 years and could only finish as high as 2nd in the AL West. In those days, the only

teams that advanced to the post season were the winners of the four MLB divisions: the AL East, AL West, NL East, and NL West. The Rangers were never able to properly contend and missed the playoffs every year until 1996. The Rangers went 24 years without ever reaching the postseason. It would be another 14 years before they reached their first World Series, which they would lose four games to one.

There is no way of sugarcoating it; the Texas Rangers are an underachieving baseball franchise. They have been snake bitten by bad luck, unlucky trade deals, and years of suffering. This AL West team is not alone; teams like the Milwaukee Brewers, San



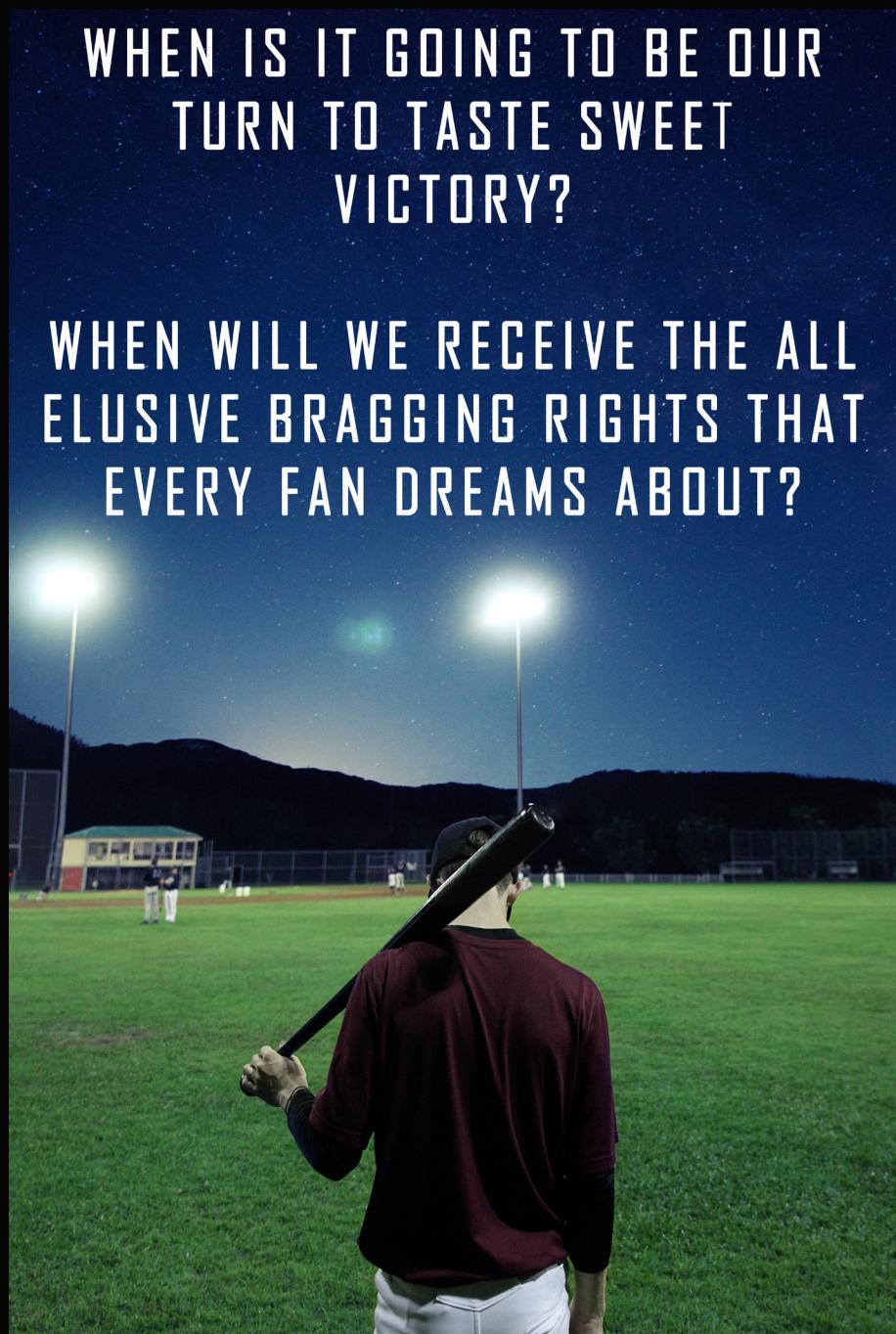
Diego Padres, and Seattle Mariners, and many others have also had their share. Yet, these teams still fill up ballparks every year. They still gain millions of dollars in revenue every year. They still fail to win anything relevant year after year. However, the fans do not seem to care. We still watch eagerly hoping that our team will do something decent this season.

Every year we are sadly disappointed as our teams fail to reach the promise land. I am somewhat of a spoiled Rangers fans because the team has reached the World Series two times in my lifetime.

In 2010 and 2011, the Rangers flipped the script and threw away almost 40 years of futility, by winning the AL pennant and sending their patient fans to a World Series appearance. The Rangers were beat in 5 games in 2010 as the San Francisco Giants wiped away 50 years of their own frustration by winning their first title since 1954. It was a tough series loss to swallow for Rangers fans, but it was a sign of hopeful times ahead for this distraught franchise. 2011 was harder to cope with. The Rangers shot their way to the World Series by being the one of the best teams in the AL with a record of 96-66. They stormed passed the Tampa Bay Rays in the ALDS and the Detroit Tigers in the ALCS to have an opportunity to win it all. Their opponent would be the St. Louis Cardinals.

The Cardinals already had 10 championships under their belt and were ready to add another. The series was neck and neck until game 6, when the Rangers flirted with history not once, but twice, and were unable to close the deal. In the 9th inning, the Rangers were leading 7-5 with their ace closer Natali Feliz on the mound. He had worked his way in a jam with two men on base and two outs. The man at the plate was the Cardinals' David Freese. Feliz had worked the count to 1-2. The Rangers were one strike away from their first World Series win. They were one strike away from writing history. They were one... until David Freese hits a game-tying triple that is.

So, the game was tied and we would go into extra innings. In the 10th inning, the same exact thing happened. The Rangers had jumped out to a 9-8 lead and the Cardinals had their backs against the wall once again. With two men out, and a 2-2 pitch count, the Rangers once again were on the verge of their first ever title. Then suddenly, the Cardinals' Lance Berkman hit a game-tying single and the madness continued. In the 11th, none other than David Freese hit a game-winning homerun. The series was tied at 3 now and a game 7 would have to be played. Game 7 was an afterthought. It was an utter shock to the system as to what had just happened. How did the Rangers manage to lose this game? Never in the



WHEN IS IT GOING TO BE OUR
TURN TO TASTE SWEET
VICTORY?

WHEN WILL WE RECEIVE THE ALL
ELUSIVE BRAGGING RIGHTS THAT
EVERY FAN DREAMS ABOUT?

history of the World Series, which is 100 plus years, has a team come back from such adversity. It was unheard of! And it happened to my Texas Rangers. The Cardinals would win game 7 to take their 11th title and Rangers fans were again looking to next year for answers. It was one of the loudest chapters in the book of Ranger frustration.

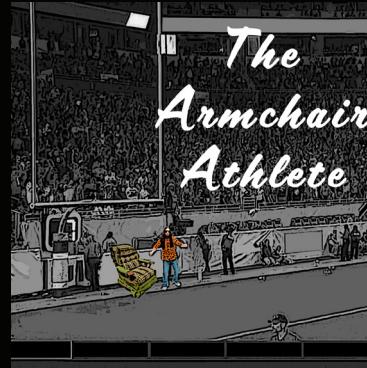
Six years later, I am still not sure if the Rangers have recovered. I know I haven't. In 2016, the Rangers were the best team in the AL. They were poised for a World Series run. Then they forgot to show up in the post season and were swept in the ALDS, the first round of the postseason, by their rival Toronto Blue Jays. It was a horrible feeling, but we as Ranger fans have almost grown accustomed to it. Will we ever see our team succeed? I certainly hope so, but it isn't looking too bright. In 2016, the Chicago Cubs solved their fans' misery by winning their first World Series title since 1908. The Rangers are not too far off as they have now gone 56 seasons without a WS title. When is it going to be our turn to taste sweet victory? When will we receive the all elusive bragging rights that every fan dreams about?

My other beloved sports teams, the Dallas Cowboys, have had a similar fate in the past two decades. The Cowboys, or America's Team, have been dealt with the same futility as their baseball neighbor the past 20 years. Success has seemed to run away from

them every time they come close to it. Growing up a Cowboys fan is a much different feeling however. The Cowboys are one of the most prosperous teams in NFL history and you grow up being taught all their grand success and their many Super Bowl wins. It seems like a glamorous life, but these lies are not granted as the Cowboys disappoint year after year.

Like a man working a living wage, or a cat chasing a mouse it'll never catch, sports fans continue to adore and watch their favorite teams no matter the outcome because we must. Win, lose, or tie, I am a Rangers fan until I die! I might give in to the empty promises that a new season brings, but that does not mean I am going to stop watching when the season gets rough.

So, good luck to everybody's favorite team this season! I have a baseball game to catch!



I MIGHT GIVE IN TO THE EMPTY PROMISES THAT A
NEW SEASON BRINGS, BUT THAT DOES NOT MEAN
I AM GOING TO STOP WATCHING WHEN THE
SEASON GETS ROUGH.



Lemon

Jam





SEARCHING THE SOUND: AMPS

BY CARLOS
REYES

There are so many questions young musicians out there need answered. With today's abundance of resources, it can be overwhelmingly difficult to find any kind of satisfying answer. There are so many varying opinions for literally every detail of everything needed in a music studio of any type.

I recently set out to buy an amplifier for a guitar. Not knowing what I was looking for, I turned to Google for answers. If you're looking for in depth details on things such as, "what color is the circuit board inside the pedal?" on every page and forum you find, then that's the right place to start. But let's be honest. You're probably never going to need that information and its more than likely going to confuse you and you'll end up wasting time on something you didn't need.

Now let's say I ask the question "Which amp sounds better? A Marshall JCM 900, or a Line 6 Spider head?" You will probably get a 50/50 split between opinions, each with varying reasons why. Both brands are very well known in the guitar world, and both have their pros and cons, so now you're stuck. The easiest solution I've found is to actually go and test out different amps! Do the minimum amount of online searching as possible. It's a little cliché, but let your ears guide you. Only you know what you want and why you want it, so if it does what you want, then you've already got a starting point.

I would say the most important thing to know

when buying an amp is what genre you'll be playing. If you're looking for an amp with beautiful crisp clean to play jazz and only jazz, and you find a Mesa Triple Rectifier with the type of clean sound you're looking for (you probably won't as this is an extreme comparison), then you might want to try to find something a little more geared toward the jazz genre. The reason I say this is because the Triple Rectifier is an amp created for massive bone-crushing distortion, which easily goes for over \$1000 brand new. You'll probably never need the enormous amounts of layer upon layer of distortion, so you'll have easily spent over \$500 on features you'll never use. On the other hand, if you go for a Fender Princeton Reverb, not only will the price be a lot less, but you will have more features suitable for the jazz genre.

After some searching, an inevitable question will arise! Tube or Solid State? For some, this is a deal breaker. For others, it's the least significant thing in the world. If you think this might be something that will influence your decision buying amps, then you ought to know the major and most important differences without all the complicated stuff in between. In a tube amp, the signal created from playing the guitar goes through into the amp and through a varying number of tubes depending on the amp. After going through the tubes and anything else in between the speaker and the tubes, we hear the amplified sound. The sound created by the signal going through the tubes is

generally warmer, more well-rounded, and regarded as more “lively”. Playing at high or full volume on the amp will give the amp an overdriven sound, which means that the amplified sound will be slightly distorted. Some of the downsides to playing to a tube amp are the risk of blowing a tube. On older models, if one of the tubes gives out, you have no sound at all. On the bright side, if you have an extra tube, you simply switch out and you’re ready to finish the gig!

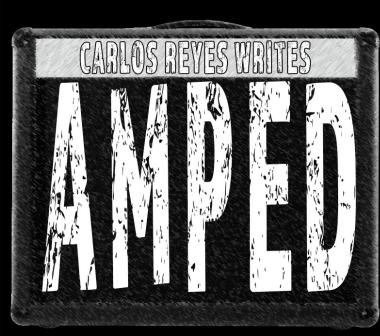
That being said, there are also solid state amps. In a solid state amp, the entire signal is passing through a circuit board. No tubes. People usually say that the sound of a solid state amp is thinner or not as “lively”. Some of the benefits of solid state amps are that they don’t have the heat of a tube amp, and they don’t need to have the tubes changed. Also, on the newer models, they carry features loaded with digital effects. Most tube amps only have a reverb or nothing at all. The downsides of solid state amps are that if a fuse is blown, you probably won’t be able to play the rest of the night unless you have another amp as a backup. The problem is repairable, but it’s easier to just use another amp the rest of the night.

Some people say they can tell if it’s a tube amp or not just by listening, but that’s usually not the case anymore as solid state amps are much more faithful to the tube sounds and nuances. Also, the setup used from the rest of the gear is crucial. It’s very possible for a full-tube Marshall stack to sound weaker and thinner

than a fully digital Line 6 stack if the setup being used on the Marshall is poor. EQ and other effects largely play into the equation, as well as the kind of guitar, the kind of pickups, the style of the cabinets being used, and even the strings on the guitar!

In my opinion both are great! If I can’t get a sound that I like, I’ll avoid it at all cost. Even if the greatest of legends use that setup, if it’s not what I’m going for, then it’s not for me.

Keep in mind that amps DO influence your overall sound whether you’re in a band or a guitar and vocals. For example, if you hear an unfamiliar song on the radio, but you know who is singing, you come to realize that you recognized the difference in the voice of that particular person in contrast to others. Amps have a very similar effect on the music. Both Miss May I and Metallica use high gain amps, and although their styles are different, if Metallica was playing through Miss May I’s setup, they wouldn’t sound so much like Metallica anymore. Metallica uses Marshall live, and Miss May I uses Peavey live, a completely different sound. The bottom line is to play through something you like and what mixes well with the band. All the other details are important, but they’re not the most important.



THE PLAYLIST



Lemon Jams Presents The Playlist, an open submission music review section meant to bring your ideas about our favorite artists to print. If you are interested in being a contributing artist email chriscasti50@gmail.com with your idea for a review.

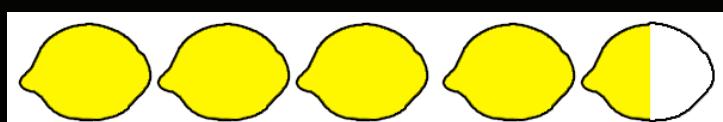
Tyler, The Creator Flower Boy



**Contributing Writer:
Jesse Robles**

Homophobe. Atheist. Devil Worshiper. These are a few of the words that have been used to describe Tyler, The Creator and his music as he started to become the popular artist he is today. Flower Boy is an album where we are listening to a side of Tyler that we have never seen before. It's an album packed with catchy hooks throughout its track list. Tyler took to his social media and started a countdown which led to the release of the first singles. "Who Dat Boy" and "911/Mr. Lonely" were the first two singles released accompanied by a music video. "Who Dat Boy" features A\$AP Rocky and is similar to the Tyler we knew before Flower Boy. "911/Mr. Lonely" is a slower song with a jazzy feel in which Tyler both sings and raps. This interesting combination of the artists' many talents works so nicely with a little feature from Frank Ocean. The next single released was "Boredom". With a little help from Rex Orange County and Anna of the North, Tyler takes being bored and creates a song while encouraging you to "find some time to do something." The last single he released is "I Ain't Got Time!" Tyler wanted Kanye West or Nicki Minaj to have a verse on this song, but both artists felt as if it

wasn't their style. Regardless of what could've been, Tyler did his thing and flexed his lyricism as a rapper. The album as a whole has some amazing tracks with beautiful chords, soft melodies, and lyrics where Tyler really gives listeners a look into what he has been dealing with since his last album, Cherry Bomb. Tyler speaks on his own sexuality which has the internet in a debate on whether or not he is gay. When you listen to the song "Garden Shed" you get a sense of sincerity. Sincerity that shows you who Tyler really is. My favorite track on this record is "See You Again" featuring the Kali Uchis. My least favorite track would have to be "Enjoy Right Now, Today." Although it does have a nice drum beat that helps us march towards the sunset that is the end of the album, it is the only track without words so I can't sing along. After much thought I rate Flower Boy 4.5 lemons / 5 lemons





THE
LEMON