**Beast of No Nation**

A huge eye opener for me, a hit in the face with harsh reality. Beautifully shot with a very clear message sent to the audience. One of the biggest takeaways for me was how similar the training of the kids and the structure of the child army was to Singapore BMT. In Singapore most people will talk about how NS builds independence and makes boys into men, the actual NSFs will call it a waste of time, but in reality every single male in this country is being trained to kill, and that should be more frightening than what people make it out to be. Granted, the situation in Africa is a lot worse.

The parallels throughout the movie were very apparent, like the kids playing at Aku’s home village, in the child army and finally at the rehabilitation center. The repeated use of the children rap battling in their dialect at several instances also serves to remind the audience that these are kids. Aku’s slow descent from a bright eyed kid at the start to a vengeful killing machine to finally a broken boy, all in the span of what seemed like a year, is truly heartbreaking.

**Hotel Rwanda**

“When they see this they’ll say ‘oh god that’s horrible’ and carry on eating their dinner” is such a powerful line and truly emphasises the state of the world and its bystander issue. This is further emphasised when an interviewee over the radio beats around the bush and brings up the ‘definition of genocide’ while the characters listen incredulously.

This movie hit me a little less than Beast of No Nation, but it still clearly illustrates the cruelty of man driven mad with political ideology, but also the strength of those who choose to oppose it, as seen from Paul’s ability to save his people.

**Blood Diamond**

Ok I’m sorry but this movie was bad, is that just me? I feel like it couldn’t decide whether it wanted to be an over the top action flick or one that proposes moral dilemmas. The love story felt forced and honestly nobody in this movie felt likeable. Maybe it’s just because I started with BONN.

It frames the rebels as crazed, purely evil, bloodthirsty beasts without showing the other side, and frames the warriors in the forest like simpletons. Solomon showed wisdom sometimes, and then proceeds to devolve into a simpleton. Also he makes horrible decisions that makes me want to pull my hair out, fatherly love can only carry you so far. Also the lady is a double standard bitch I can’t stand her.

**This War of Mine**

I jumped into the game not really having any expectations. I liked how the games does very little to teach you how to play it. It drove home the idea of helplessness, like if war broke out tomorrow many of us wouldn’t know what to do with ourselves and we would just have to fumble along to survive.

Throughout the game I constantly felt like I didn’t have enough, always being short a resource to progress. Sometimes I had food but no weapons. When I finally got weapons I needed food. When I had to go murder some people for food my character became depressed. When they’re depressed they can’t do things and we eventually run out of food. Then everyone hangs themselves. Maybe I’m just bad at the game, but this seemingly never-ending cycle of struggling hopelessly seems to emulate the feelings of war, and how victims just can’t seem to ever catch a break.

I survived 14 days btw things aren’t looking good for me.

**Papers, Please**

I had watched people online play a bit of this game so I had a general idea of what to expect. I was still bad though. It’s definitely a little more slow paced than TWOM, and perhaps a little more boring? Maybe I didn’t get far enough. Certain moral dilemmas posed were interesting, like when I denied a person even though he had all the right credentials because I was given a tip from a stripper, or when I allowed a lady in without permit so she could be with her husband. I find that the weight of these dilemmas are alleviated however when you realise that you can make 2 penalties for free each day, so unless you’re constantly making mistakes (like me) there’s less penalty for helping people? Something to consider for game design.