

Top 10 household items used to make a bong (to be blunt)



1. Beer cans
2. Apples, carrots and potatoes
3. Juice bottles
4. Two-liter bottle and a bucket of water
5. Toilet paper tube and tinfoil
6. Discarded PVC pipe
7. Empty pen tube
8. Flute (or other wind instrument)
9. Water cannon (it really works)
10. Surgical tubing and a watermelon (That extra duct tape you have can be useful for all of these.)

Gamers submit to great 128-bit digital mother

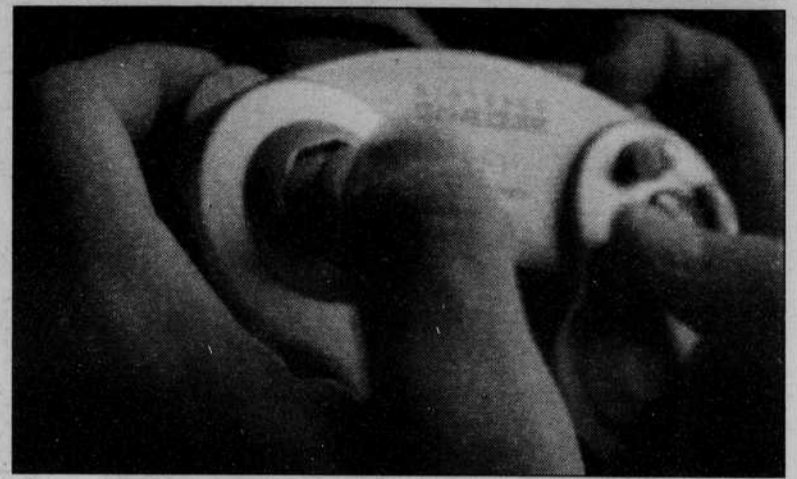
Hardcore gamers live a life of late nights, flashing lights and stomped goombas

Jacquelyn Lewis
Pulse Editor

Hardcore video game players inhabit a world of flashing lights and glowing consoles, but they might be anyone from college students to professionals — and their legions are growing. According to survey results released by the Interactive Digital Software Association in 2001, 60 percent of Americans age six or older say they play video games on a regular basis. A May 2002 survey by the same company revealed that U.S. consumers purchased 219 million video and computer games in 2001, a dramatic rise from 1996's 105 million.

Springfield resident Derek Brandt said he became a frequent player when he purchased an Xbox last year. The 30-year-old said playing video games is a relatively new hobby for him. A friend who works as a computer analyst introduced him to the Xbox game "Halo" several months ago. Brandt now plays the game, which allows for a large group of friends to compete simultaneously, for more than 15 hours a week — up to six hours in a single night.

"The draw for me is actually the team sport of it," he said.



Adam Amato Emerald

A May 2002 survey estimated that American fans bought 219 million console and computer games in 2001.

Brandt said he doesn't see the hours he puts into game-play as a bad habit.

"I don't feel like I waste time doing it," he said.

Brandt, who holds two jobs, added that playing "Halo" helps him relieve stress after a 13- to 15-hour work day. He said the only drawback is that late hours spent playing often leave him tired.

Marge, a junior anthropology major and video game player who preferred not to reveal her last name, said excessive game play leaves her exhausted as well. She

said she has to stay up late making up for homework she did not do during the day.

"I'm perpetually tired," she said. Marge said her favorite games include "Animal Crossing," "Snood," "Tetris," "Eternal Darkness," "The Sims" and "Kingdom Hearts." She plays games on computers, PlayStation 2, GameCube and Game Boy.

"On some days, I can play for three hours," she said. "And on some days, I can play for five hours."

Marge said she plays as a means of escape from her daily routine.

Turn to **Games**, page 7B

The ring that binds them

The 'precious' novel and movie trilogies have spurred a worldwide fan craze of conventions and literary classes

Mason West
Movies/Music/TV Columnist

Much like the One Ring itself, J.R.R. Tolkien's "Lord of the Rings" trilogy has a power over some people. While the power may just be a healthy interest in fantasy, when fans, like the author, stroke copies of the extended edition DVD murmuring, "We love it, my precious," there may be a problem.

The original obsession started with the books.

Senior Jessica Bailey began her love affair with the "Lord of the Rings" as a sophomore in high school, when she and her then-boyfriend would read it to each other in the park.

"We never finished," she said. "But I finished them the next year and never looked back."

Now, Bailey never sleeps without one of the books beside her bed.

"It's so easy to read in your spare time," she said. "I just turn to a page and start reading."

She owns four complete copies of the trilogy, each of which she has read. She reread the entire series before each film release and will have another under her belt before "The Return of the King" opens in December.

Bailey said she also has the story on CD so she can listen to it in her car — which came in handy when driving to Portland to see the midnight release of "The Two Towers" and then returning to Eugene the same night to work in the morning.

Others take their love of Middle-earth and expand the story with their own fictions. Rebecca Brauning writes fan fictions and has posted a few on www.tolkienonline.com. Brauning also created a list of 127 telltale signs of a "Lord of the Rings" obsession.

For Brauning, who lives in the Dominican Republic, Web sites are a way to connect with other fans worldwide.

"I am a constant poster on Tolkien



Joe Kukowski for the Emerald

Edward Shanahan and Tracy Pong, members of the Seattle Knights weapons demonstration group, do battle at a Lord of the Rings conference.

Online, where I have about 1,150 posts," she said. "Since I don't know many fans near where I live, that is usually where I discuss."

Other fans attend gatherings like RingCon, held last weekend in Gig Harbor, Wash. The "con" (for convention) boasted an appearance by Brad Dourif, who plays Wormtongue in "The Two Towers."

Former University student Justin Speyer performed at the con with the Seattle Knights, a weapons demonstration group. He was a "generic orc/goblin thing" taking punishment from the good guys.

"While I'm not a con junky — I don't travel the country dressing like an elf — I do belong to an organization that hires itself out to do live steel combat at (renaissance) fairs," Speyer said. "... As far as some people are concerned, that does border on the crazy-and-ornuts category."

From the academic perspective, Saint Louis University Professor John Walter said it is too much when reality is abandoned for fiction.

"We're not meant to stay in Middle-earth, but to enjoy it, find within it what we want ... and bring that back with us," Walter said.

Walter has taught three courses

with Tolkien's works, his first at Portland State University with professor Marjorie Burns. Both Walter and Burns referred to Tolkien's essay "On Fairy-Stories" when discussing fantasy as a vice.

"Tolkien himself was greatly drawn to other worlds," Burns said. "He knew the dangers."

Walter said his 2001 class, the first Tolkien course offered at SLU, had a huge waiting list.

"I had students whom I'd never met chasing me across campus begging to be let in."

He said there is some resistance to serious study of Tolkien's work.

"Various members of the British literary elite freaked out when the reading public chose the 'Lord of the Rings' as their favorite literary work of the past century," he said.

Walter said the public chose Tolkien's trilogy over works like "Ulysses," because it speaks to everyone on the same level and "there's an anti-snobishness about it."

Fans like Bailey agree. "I don't think I'm cooler than anybody," she said. "I'm a missionary, and I want to convert every person I meet."

Contact the Pulse columnist at masonwest@dailyemerald.com.

Diablo's Downtown
Your invited to the HOTTEST Night Club in Eugene!
FEATURING THE BEST IN LIVE MUSIC AND ENTERTAINMENT 7 NIGHTS A WEEK!!!

Sun - S.I.N. Night - Martini Hour 10-1
Mon - Monster Truck Mondays - Rock
Tue - Jazz Night, Live Jazz Bands
Wed - Funk Wed. Underground Hip-Hop
Thu - L80's Night Ladies Appreciation
Fri - Hip-Hop Tremorville
Sat - Retro House Night

FOOD SPECIALS DURING MARTINI HOUR MON-FRI 4-5PM
NEW FREE Internet Cafe 802.11 Comp. High Speed

Hottest Menu In Town! Served till 2am

March 17th St. Patricks Day!
March 29th 2 Year Anniversary

www.diablosdowntown.com 959 Pearl St 343-2346

vices to avoid ...
don't air your dirty laundry

One Dollar Wash

Top Load Washers 7 - 11 am Weekdays

- 14 TOP LOAD & 9 FRONT LOAD WASHERS accommodate all your laundering needs
- NEW EXTRACTOR saves time and extends the life of your clothes
- EXCEPTIONAL CUSTOMER SERVICE for more than 27 years

Mr. Clean Jean's Coin-Op Laundry
240 E. 17th (between High & Pearl)