

Roleplayers hone their skills

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Create a whole new world by preventing destruction, battling evil, traveling to the brink of chaos and back, or simply stepping into the shoes of a character who couldn't be more different than yourself, all without even getting out of your chair. This is the task of groups of people that gather to do role playing games. There are several groups that meet right here at Clackama.

Role playing is something we've all done before, whether at a job, for a friend, in the bedroom, or as a hobby played with groups of people. Most are based off of books or cartoons and are usually fantasy based.

"There are many different games from Cowboys, Magic, Star Trek, Star Wars, video games, CCG: collectable card games, or even naughty nurse and doctor can be considered a form of role playing," explained Chris Anderson. "(Although,) video games provide much less face to face interaction as opposed to other methods," explained Anderson.

A huge gaming culture has sprung up around these roles playing games or RPGs providing entertainment for gamers of all ages and levels. The unique aspect of role playing games as opposed to your average card game is the amount of creativity, imagination and ultimately group cooperation utilized to produce the event.

Anderson has been playing different role playing games since seventh grade, so for about 14 years. Over the years, he has played several different games including his favorite, Rift, a post-apocalyptic game.

He said, "The best games are table top as opposed to online games. The games take a tremendous amount of imagination."

Anderson is currently the Game Master or GM of the Star Wars group and has been a GM since

eighth grade.

He said that, "being the game master can bum you out after a few times a week."

The game master is basically the ring leader of the group and is usually someone who has played the longest. Star Wars is a table-top game ideally played with eight to nine people and this group tries to meet every week.

The game master is the one who comes up with the driving characters and seems to have the last say in the happenings of game sequence. The master also plays any general characters such as shop keepers or any other generic roles; these are called NPCs or non player characters while all the other people's characters are PC or player characters.

Games can usually be played with as little as two to as many as 20 people.

Anderson explained, "That in large groups like that there can be two GMs, one for the evil side and one for the good."

The games try to incorporate everyday life aspects that aren't part of the game into the game itself. "For example, silly excuses are used to leave for class or bathroom breaks such as it started raining or their character suddenly developed narcolepsy. Or, if leaving for a soda, the character is running up a spiral staircase not involved in the game," explained Anderson.

Another player in the game is Devon Seale who has also been playing for several years and started with Star Trek. He also plays "Holy Land, a Christian based game that doesn't take place in Jerusalem."

In these games, "real experience helps progress the game," said Seale.

Keith Underwood had been gaming for about eight years and is another player in the Star Wars game.

Underwood said, "I have two characters, one evil and one good. Sometimes one of my characters is trying to kill the other one so no matter what, I win."



Robert Crawford Clackamas

Jaime Kemp, left, and Zach, who wouldn't give his last name, right, fight against James Furman and Reagan Hunt, off to the left. The four of them are planeswalkers in the CCG game Magic: The Gathering.

This Star Wars game is played in a "twisted universe that is different from the one shown in the movies. For example Luke Skywalker, Princess Leia, are children who live together with Padme. Obi Wan Kenobi is evil and Anakin is a non-helmeted Darth Vader," explained Anderson.

The group is "all playing together on one ship but each using their skills independently," said Seale.

These variations from traditional Star Wars allow for more artistic licensing in these games. The game is played with a 20-sided die, which is rolled to find the outcome of each action or event; the higher the number the better the outcome for the character.

"So a 20 is epicly success-

ful while a one is an epic failure in which the character not only doesn't succeed, but something bad happens, too," said Anderson.

"So whether encountering pirates, using the force to make pretty or scary things, there is sure to be lots of chaos," he said.

Said Anderson, "Table top RPGs have been looked down upon and considered a waste of time. There was even one player who committed suicide when his character of 15-20 years died. Strange things can happen when mentally unstable people get too involved."

Another group that meets here at Clackamas plays Magic. It can be played with two to 10 players; the more people the longer the game. The use of characters on the

cards creates roles and direct the game.

Jaime Kemp explained, "can be played as just casual role playing. There are two different types of play: al and the super nerds that play battling."

He describes himself as a casual player, but likes competitively too."

There are countless people who enjoy these games, and after which one is played, the limitless possibilities for action and character development. Anyone that has ever role knows the excitement of getting out of yourself to enter a new world of fantasy and intellectual creation.

New rock opera DVD splattered with bloody ballads



Photo illustration by Kayta Berge and John Shufelt Clackamas Print

Murder and music unite in this macabre vision of a not-so-distant future

Jess Sheppard

Arts & Culture Editor

Seventeen years ago everything seemed perfect for Rotti, Marni, Nathan and Blind Mag.

Rotti Largo had just found the cure for the world's epidemic of organ failure. Blind Mag, the opera singer, received new eyes, courtesy of Rotti's company GeneCo. And, Marni and Nathan had found true love in each other's eyes.

But, things only seemed perfect on the outside.

In a fit of jealous rage, Marni's ex, Rotti, has her murdered during childbirth. Distraught and blaming himself for the death of his wife, Nathan accepts a job with GeneCo. as an organ repossessor and raises his daughter Shilo in isolation.

Narrated for the viewer in panel to panel comic book format, this is the premise of Repo! The Genetic Opera, a twisted, gory, rock and roll opera now on DVD.

The movie stars Alexa Vega as Shilo, the heroine, Anthony Stewart Head as Nathan, the infamous Repo Man, Paul Sorvino as Rotti Largo, the antagonist overlord, and Sarah Brightman as Blind Mag, the wise and melancholy opera singer. Bill Moseley, Paris Hilton and Skinny Puppy's Ogre play Rotti's strange and sadistic children.

Also important to the show is the writer Terrance Zdunich, who plays the part of Grave Robber, the film's seductively macabre narrator.

The movie is truly mind-blowing, from the comic book beginning chronicling the past of the main cast, to the dark and engaging scenery that portrays the world as a corrupt empire built on one vast cemetery. Imagine, if you can, a world where you can finance your new organs, but if you miss a payment your very life will be repossessed by the ominous Repo Man.

The story is augmented with quirky and sometimes musical numbers.

And on that very note, let the viewer be that this movie has an edge for a very good reason: the delightfully ear-splitting musical numbers that at the same time as the gruesome gutting you see.

One song in particular, "Legal Assassin," features Nathan singing from the tom of his heart about how he row over the untimely death of his wife, and how he is a lie without her. But he sings this truly piece, Nathan is brutally sorting his intestines into piles.

If blood and gore music at the same time is not your cup of tea, there is also not your cup of tea. For the sadistically minded Repo! The Genetic Opera, the delight to watch with a of similarly minded friends if you need to laugh at the ulous bloodshed and characters. This is the for deviant lovers.