

# Retrogaming

Bleah. All weekend and no post to show for it. I could throw in a some edu-humor but I think you five readers would rather me put something substantial. Unfortunately it is too late in the evening for that. Besides, I really don't have anything to post- Friday was uninteresting and I didn't go to church since I had the weekend off from kid's ministry and needed the break. Should I start adding posts for one of the other passions I hold- retrogaming? I wanted to start a ~~sister~~ brother blog, but I have a hard enough time writing for **this** blog. Here are a few sites to whet an appetite for retrogaming:

<https://www.mameworld.net/>

<https://www.emulation9.com/>

<https://www.retroremakes.com/>

The first site is everything MAME for arcade emulation. The second is pretty much just a news site for all types of emulator releases: computer, arcade, and console. There really is no good site these days for computer and console emulation. For emulators you need game files to play, be it ROM images, disks, or CD images, but I don't think I should be telling you where to find these given their legality. The third link is all about remakes of older games, usually for Windows but sometimes for other systems. This would be the easiest one to get started with, but as remakes they are usually reimaginings (thanks Sci-fi Channel for the term!) rather than exact copies, so if it's the original you want you will need to go with emulation.

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# Choices

Tonight was the big night for auditions. There were a total of six auditioners (5 ladies and yours truly). I was familiar with all but two of the females. I have worked with the remainder on more than 1 occasion... so at least I was familiar with most of them. And of course, I HAD to be the first to arrive. But when volunteers were taken to be the first to perform, there were actually people who were more eager than I.

The first to go was a high school age girl who had never been in a show her entire life. She knew the story of [Little Women](#), has read the book, seen the movie, and just wanted to try something new. She chose to sing "Think of Me" from [The Phantom of the Opera](#). She was really nervous. After she got through the excerpt, the director asked her to sing it again and gave her advice on how to better perform the song. The second time she sounded much better.

The next person to audition was a freshman in college who came just to audition for the show. My apologies because I do not remember what she sang or how she did.

The next contestant was someone I have worked with on several previous occasions. I have been in different show casts and she has been the vocal director for past shows. Most recently, we were part of the choir for a performance of *Faure's Requiem*. After she performed her two selections from [Little Women](#), her student also performed the same piece. This is something that seems very odd. I'm sure that it is not unheard of to audition with a song from the show you are trying for, but it just seems weird to me.

Which brings us to you know who. I chose to sing the last 16 measures of "Any Dream Will Do" from [Joseph...](#) I chose it because I felt that it really shows my vocal range and I have

practiced it a time or two; but it has been a while since I have been able to rehearse it with an accompanist. I did take a bit of liberty with the last measure by taking it up an octave.. it just seemed right. Apparently, the director thought so, too because he said: "Good choice."

The rest of the tryout was basically finding where our vocal range is. On the audition form, it had a space marked "Vocal Part." I put tenor/baritone. The accompanist remarked that I sound more tenorish. I agreed so we labeled me a tenobear. It has been a while since I have gone through and actually determined where I fall. I have about an octave and a half (low A...which surprised me to a high G then on to falsetto where I almost reached soprano range). After the range game, I was surprised by the amount of writing the pianist did.

All in all, it seemed to be a good audition. The director was very laid back and made all of us feel at ease which is the mark of a good actor's director. Now all I have to do is **WAIT.....** which is always the hardest part of any casting process. We were informed that it could be a cast of 15-20 with doubling or a cast of 40. Unless the turnout is better tomorrow afternoon, it may be the 15.

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## We Squeeze To Please

1995's James Bond offering, [Goldeneye](#), introduced [Pierce Brosnan](#) as Agent 007. His road to the role is a long, detailed journey that I will not elaborate upon. The plot concerns the efforts of the Russian mafia to control the world's electronic circuits with the use of a high tech satellite named Goldeneye. This would lead to a financial meltdown on a global scale.

However, as with most Bond films, the plot takes second seat to the tried and true devices seen in the best of the series. The pre-title sequence shows 007 taking a 720 foot plunge from atop a dam (which still holds the world's record for the highest bungee jump from a fixed structure). Later while driving a large armored tank, Bond chases villains through the streets of St. Petersburg.

The femme fatale, played by [Famke Janssen](#), disposes of her victims in a rather crushing manner. Some of the most memorable character names are attributed to roles from the spy series. [Goldfinger](#) gave us Pussy Galore; the rather forgettable [Moonraker](#) introduced Dr. Holly Goodhead; the title character of [Octopussy](#); not to be out done, Xenia Onatopp appears in *Goldeneye*.

The film was also significant for two other important reasons. It was the first to be produced following the collapse of the Soviet Union. *Goldeneye* also introduced [Dame Judi Dench](#) as the first female "M", head of the British Secret Service. She is extremely quick in establishing her position and making it known that she sees Bond as a "sexist, misogynist dinosaur" and a "relic of the Cold War."

While not the best of the series, *Goldeneye* does have several bits of necessary Bond lore to make it an important segment in the continuing franchise. It does have enough action to keep the viewer entertained and that is the most important part of any 007 film.

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## Christmas in April?

After walking downstairs this morning, I ALMOST looked at the calendar to make sure I knew what day it was. On the

television, the [1994 remake](#) of the classic *Miracle on 34th Street* was playing. Whichever channel was playing this must have been pretty desperate, especially at the end of April when most people's thoughts are not focused on anything remotely related to Christmas. Plus, why choose such a horrible remake to play?

The beloved [1947 movie](#) starred [John Payne](#), [Maureen O'Hara](#), a young [Natalie Wood](#), and Edmund Gwenn who received the Best Supporting Actor Oscar for his role as Kris Kringle. It also featured William Frawley who is best known for his role as Fred Mertz on "[I Love Lucy](#)."

The overall plot of both films is relatively the same. A department store Santa who claims to be the real thing, is put on trial to prove his sanity. He seeks to not only convince the court but also a young girl who has been trained by her mother to dismiss all notions of myths, fantasy, and imagination.

Too much was changed from the original to the most recent remake. Characters were dropped including a young man who works with and idolizes Kris. In the original, Kris sings a charming song to a young Dutch girl in her native tongue. Macy's department store was wise enough to not allow the use of its name in the remake; instead, the name was changed to Kohl's (or if you prefer, Coal's which 20th Century Fox should have been given in their collective stockings).

But, the casting of [Mara Wilson](#) as Susan sent shivers down my spine. Something about the youngster's acting just makes me cringe. This film and [Mrs. Doubtfire](#) are the only times I remember seeing her on screen.

There have been a few other television remakes of the immortal classic. However, as in most Hollywood remakes, the original is far better. Next holiday season, treat the entire family to this fun movie (even if you have to explain to the children

why there is no color).

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## Voices in the air

I'm sitting downstairs at the [theater](#) while tryouts are going on for "Little Women". My youngest is one of the singers/actors trying out. I'm sitting down here to get out of the way, and to make sure they don't ask me to try out. I don't sing, I don't dance, don't ask. But as I sit here we have some very lovely voices filling the air. I'm not sure who is who, but I think I heard my daughter once or twice. Me, I would hate trying to determine who would be in the show. For a small little theater in rural Ohio, we have a lot of very talented people. I'm sure the director will have a tough time of it, but in the end this will make a better show.

Fun stuff theater. I've been involved in almost every aspect of it. I do stay away from musicals, except to run lights or back stage stuff. I've had lots of fun with all of it. This is sometimes my second home. So check out the [dates of the show](#) and come on by.

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## The Office – Night Out

Just reading the synopsis of last night's episode even before I saw it made me laugh out loud:

Michael and Dwight decide a trip to the Big Apple is in order. There, they hope to mingle with bigwig Ryan and his

colleagues at the nightclubs. Back in Scranton, the staffers must work on Ryan's pet website project – on a Saturday, no less.

The episode was hilarious, as usual. I won't give too much away, except that I almost fell off my couch laughing when Earl or Hank (or whatever the security guard's name ended up being) made a cameo – priceless!

For my friends who have just started watching the show, I don't know about you, but I really like to read tvguide's blog about the show the day after I watch it. Go to [tvguide.com](http://tvguide.com), find the tab at the top that says "What's on TV", and then go to Tv Show Blogs under that and find The Office. Here is a quick link to the tvguide write-up of this week's episode.

I agree with the tvguide writer – I caught on to Ryan's drug use pretty early in the episode, just before he ran for the bathroom sniffing, which only confirmed my suspicion. But I think the writer of the episode ([BJ Novak](#), aka "Ryan" himself) meant for it to be obvious that Ryan was experimenting with the nose candy. And to answer the tvguide blogger's question, yes, I think it will spell problems for him with corporate in the future. He's really been on my nerves lately, but in a good way, he is fun to watch and be annoyed with. Now with his drug problem and the fact that his 'perfect life' facade is starting to crack, I feel badly for him. It's been fun to watch his transformation from temp to corporate bigwig, and along the way, he's always been kind of a jerk, not a very likable person at all. But that's what is so great about the Office – as the tvguide blogger says, "The Office is a terrific show because most of its comedy is rooted in real human behavior (no matter how exaggerated)..." – I couldn't agree more!

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# Parenthood

After all this piñata talk (found the ñ symbol!), we had to pop in the movie [Parenthood](#) the other night. Along with the hilarious piñata scene (ok, now I am over-using the ñ a little bit), I had actually forgotten how entertaining this movie really is. It's a really good blend of comedy and drama, and it's not just another silly comedy – it actually has a valuable life lesson. I highly recommend it to anyone who has kids, but I do not recommend it for the whole family since it's rated PG13 and can actually be somewhat crude at points. It has *great* directing and acting and 2 academy award nominations to boot.

The movie revolves around the Buckman family – elderly, empty-nesters (sort-of) and their 4 grown children and their families who are all facing regular life problems of their own. [Steve Martin](#) plays Gil, a man whose own overused stress responses to everyday life are mirrored in his son, and that situation only stresses him out further! He is such a worrywart that he has lost all ability to enjoy regular life and its trials and tribulations, and my favorite part of the movie is when he realizes this; thanks to the wise, if confused, words of his very elderly grandmother. This scene is hilarious and heartwarming at the same time, and if you're anything like me (someone who tends to be a worrywart, sweats the small things), a movie like this really helps to keep the small bumps of life in perspective.

Watching this movie again as a parent made me appreciate it so much more than I appreciated seeing it as a teenager. Again, I'd really recommend it to any parent, and if you've seen it already, I'd say try it again if it's been awhile. That's what I did, and I would have to say that it's now one of my



favorite movies!

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## Lost a post...

I really don't know what happened to it. I finished a post, and was sure I pressed the publish button, but it is gone. I typed it so fast it didn't seem to have time to save a draft copy either??? Oh well, it was only electrons.

Another blog got me thinking about security. As children we carry blankies, have our favorite stuffed animal or something else we just won't part with. Our parents can also give us a sense of security. They hug when we aren't feeling well, the kiss to "make it all better" are ways we feel secure. Then we grow up.

In our high school days being part of a group can make us feel secure. You may be surprised how many students have a favorite book, pen or key chain. Little things they can hold to make them feel better.

As we get to be adults, different things give us security. Money in the bank, a good car, a cell phone, a good job, the lock on the front door, your SO or spouse. Just losing one of the things that make you feel secure as adult can be a life altering blow. Some people never find their way back to normal when they lose their security blanket. Cases of depression can be caused by lack of secure job, being robbed (that lock didn't work), losing your money, getting in a car wreck, losing a loved one. And then we, as adults, wonder why our children don't want to give up their blankies.... Just food for thought.

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# Poppies... Poppies Will Put Them To Sleep

Yes, Spring has finally arrived. For most, that means looking forward to making plans for the summer getaway. For me it means looking forward to auditioning for one of two (or this year... three) big musical productions in the area. I narrowed my choices down to two this week. I really wanted to audition for a production of [The Wizard of Oz](#). I have always wanted to be the Cowardly Lion... a fantastic character role if ever there was one. I contacted the director of the show to ask about performance dates. Alas, they begin in mid-July (after auditions for another play I am extremely excited about trying out for (now be nice)... [The Nerd](#). **And yes, I will be auditioning for the title role**, but of course will gladly accept any part offered to me.

Even while considering the possibility of dreaming that “If I Were King of the Forrrrrrest” (not Queen, not Duke, not Prince), the more logical option seemed to be to try out for the musical that is closer to home with the group I have been involved with for the past two years. It will save a bit of money on the gas tank as well. So... according to an email I received earlier today, I will make my way tomorrow to audition for a role in [Little Women](#) (and yes, there are male roles in the production).

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# Blankie Woes

I think 8 is too old for a blankie. I mean, it's ok to have one at that age, but only if it doesn't interfere with daily life. On February 19, I made a post in my blog about the same subject – the post is called Blankies. It's funny to read that post now and see how far we've come, yet we've also gone no where on this issue at the same time. My 8-year-old daughter has this raggedy blankie that goes everywhere with her... well, that's not accurate – it would if it could, but I put the kabosh on that long ago. It got so bad that if we didn't remember it to go out to eat or walmart or somewhere simple like that, the whole family would pay the price. So, probably about a year ago now, I said, that's it, blankie stays home. I got tired of the liability involved also. If we brought it to a restaurant or anywhere for that matter and it got dirty, I would have to wash it immediately when we got home or else it wouldn't be ready for bed time that night, and my daughter would put up a huge fuss. Now it's gotten to the point where I'm worried it won't make it through the wash in one piece. Heck, it's barely in one piece as it is.

A few weeks ago, I said, it's time for the blankie to stay upstairs. It's only for bed and that's it. My daughter would bring it down in the morning, then she'd leave for school all day, and I got tired of tripping over it while doing housework. She hasn't been listening to that rule very well... and old habits die hard, I guess. The other day, she brought it downstairs and left it on the couch where little sister came and sat on it. Problem was, little sister had just wet the bed, so needless to say, blankie needed a wash. Somehow, I did not find out about this until bedtime that night, when a huge fuss was made about blankie not being available for bedtime. I was not about to do a load of laundry at 10 at night, especially on a Sunday, which is technically (though it never works out this way with a family of 5 almost 6 and 3 of

them little kids), my day off laundry. Not only that, but the blankie would not have been ready for at least an hour anyway, and it was already bedtime. There was much struggle and lots of tears, but she did finally spend a night without her beloved blankie. And guess what? She survived unscathed!

A few weeks ago, she had a sleepover for girl scouts. The rules were, bring a sleeping bag or a blanket, so she planned on bringing her blankie, which is holey, threadbare, and of no use when it comes to keeping someone warm. Not only that, but she is at a good age for kids to start making fun of her for something like that, and both my husband and I know from experience that kids do not forget things easily! She has a really nice sleeping bag that she's never actually gotten to use at a sleepover yet, so we convinced her to just bring that... or so we thought. She packed her own overnight bag, and I didn't think to check for contraband. The next day when I unpacked the overnight bag, I found the stowaway blankie. I felt so duped.

Ironically, as I'm writing this very post, my husband came downstairs and said, "Taylor can't find her blankie. She is really upset about it and crying." It was downstairs today, even though it wasn't supposed to be, so I know I had to add it to my huge load of laundry to bring upstairs... I told him to pass the message to Taylor that if I find it down here again, it will be gone forever because I am so sick of the whole situation. And I haven't done anything with it yet, honest, tempting as it may be. Don't get me wrong, I'm not mean or cruel, and I don't have a problem with kids needing a comfort item, even at 8. But when that item interferes with daily life, and one cannot function without it, then I believe it's time for a change. She should hope Dad or I don't find the blankie first – we are pretty fed up with the situation and cannot guarantee the safety of the blankie should we come across it!