

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES

Maps, reviews and more
of the cool green foursome

from the editor



Lyndsey Hicks, editor-in-chief

Gaming Insurrection is a huge supporter of the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. We believe that the lean green machine is one of the best franchises to come out of the 1980s.

Gaming Insurrection presents a half-shell of coverage: We break down reviews for nine of the old-school games that put the TMNT on the video game map. We also share our thoughts about the movie portion of the franchise.

Check out our Strip Talk episode for more of our ruminations in Strip Talk on our website, www.gaminginsurrection.com

inside

CLASSIC FOCUS: TMNT



Gaming Insurrection took on the lean green machine in the 1Q2011 issue.

REVIEWS

| | |
|---|-----|
| Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles | 4,5 |
| Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles II: The Arcade Game | 6 |
| Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles III: Manhattan Project | 7 |
| Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles IV: Turtles in Time | 8 |
| Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Hyperstone Heist | 9 |
| Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles GameBoy quick hits | 10 |

COLUMNS

| | | | |
|-----------------------|---|----------------------|----|
| Cry of War | 3 | Beat.Trip.Game | 3 |
| From the Dungeon..... | 3 | Strip Talk | 11 |

THE STRIP

| | | | |
|--|----|---|----|
| Property review: TMNT..... | 11 | Property review: TMNT III | 12 |
| Property review: TMNTII: Secret of the Ooze..... | 12 | Top 5 on The Strip: Shredder quotes | 13 |

Sometimes, I love being a Turtle fan

It was 1989, and everything was right in my world when I discovered the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. I was riding the bus home from school everyday, walking to get the house key from my older brother who worked part-time at the old Pizza Hut a block from my house. This usually meant I had Pizza Hut for dinner every day as well. What kid doesn't love pizza ... for free ... every day?

It was a time of great rejoicing because as a third-grader, I had plenty of afterschool privileges. One of those was letting myself in the house, fixing a snack and watching cartoons. It was through this rite of passage as a latch-key kid that I stumbled upon the TMNT.

I was instantly intrigued by the lean, green fighting machines. They had several factors going for them: They were turtles, they had weapons and were ninja and they were teenagers. To an 8-year-old tomboy, that was magic of the highest order. They were the "bigger kids," despite being cartoons, who had responsibility and could do teenage things I couldn't. Nevermind that, at the time, I didn't know what ninjas were, I had never wielded a weapon and I had a long way to go before I was a teenager. Puberty hadn't yet hit but I knew that I was going to enjoy roaming around the city fighting crime and dodging the Shredder as a Turtle fan.

So these lovable four freaks of nature, as Shredder put it, had captured my heart. What now? What would I do with my love for Leo, Don, Mike and Raph? Simple. I realized that with the explosion in popularity of TMNT (it was huge at my elementary school like most across



Lyndsey Hicks
CRY OF WAR

the country) there would be a correlating jump in merchandise and tie-ins. Because I loved video games, I knew there would be something for the NES, and I was right. At the same time, there came the movie. And TMNTII: The Arcade Game. And the action figures. And I can't forget the original comics. Short of selling my soul to my mother, I begged and pleaded to have the original comics delivered to our home. I used the excuse that it was something new to read, so I got it without much of a fight. I also got a lunchbox and a Trapper Keeper. And a movie poster or two.

My love for the Turtle boys didn't really fade so much as I matured. When the second movie, Secret of the Ooze, came to theaters, I was right there. It was the first movie that I was allowed to see by myself as a "big kid." I was 9 years old, I was a big girl and I was a Turtle lover. It didn't get much better than that or so I thought. But my penultimate TMNT moment hadn't yet arrived.

I was 11 years old and thought of myself as a genius playwright and scribe. In what I can only describe now as a brief era of sheer ludicrousness, I decided that I would

pay the ultimate tribute to my Turtles through my brains: I wrote, produced and cast a play entitled "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: A Turtle in Love." I have no idea now why I thought it would be a good idea to gather the other neighborhood children to make a play based on Leonardo falling in love with longtime friend April O'Neil. Auditions were held on my front porch but no play was ever performed because of casting and budget difficulties.

Trust me, though, in the end Leonardo saves the day and gets the girl.

I thought I knew it all about the TMNT. But then a funny thing happened: I grew up. I put my love for TMNT on the backburner and moved on to other things in life. But a moment of my childhood came roaring back when, a few years ago, I saw my favorite green foursome had their original cartoon, the one that I ran home every day for years to watch, on DVD. I bought it, popped it in my DVD player and immediately remembered the theme song word for word.

As I sang along about Leonardo leading and Donatello doing machines, my ex-husband Jamie had this strange look in his eye. I ignored him and sang my green-loving lungs out.

Sometimes, I love being a Turtle fan.

Lyndsey Hicks is editor-in-chief of Gaming Insurrection. She can be reached by email at editor@gaminginsurrection.com

The Teenage Mutant Ninja strangeness

I was sitting on a friend's front porch getting a crash course in RPGs because they needed a fifth man. We played games all weekend. We played RoboTech mostly until my friend's father came home and became the GameMaster for my first look at the TMNT universe. It was 1987 and filled with strange creatures that just wanted to fit into the world. But at that time, I couldn't get into them that much. At that age, I cared more about running around with my imaginary ninja clan than trying to help four turtles stop some kitchen utensil from taking over the world. That's right! I didn't have just one imaginary friend; I had an entire ninja clan. Ninjas were huge in the '80s.

I was going to discuss how to make your own green machines for your games, but since Palladium Books published The Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles and



Jamie Mosley
FROM THE DUNGEON

Other Strangeness, I decided it was better if each GM could create their own green machines. I feel like I just wouldn't do them justice by giving them scores. So I want to focus on the elements of your game if you choose to create your own Ninja Turtle clan.

Now, there are a few elements that need to be in game settings before you introduce your shell-backed heroes. The game must take place in a huge city that strange happenings are the normal. A place where the people run for their lives when the giant fire-breathing moth comes out of the

sky to dine on them, but go back to their normal lives after the danger has passed. You must have at least one re-occurring nemesis that you want to stop as bad as they want to stop you. What if the Shredder mentored another being — let's call him the Blender for now. Let's say that the Blender has created an army of mutated animals with humanoid features and emotions. It is possible that your band may break away from the army because of moral conflicts. Maybe your group met your world's version of the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles and they convince you to change your evil ways. Maybe your group is the cursed Turtles. You get the idea. It is really up to you and the group.

Now for ideas about your games. I would think that this would most likely be the easiest for hero fans of all ages to come up with. You can watch, read

and talk about your favorite plots that the Turtles have encountered. If you played the original TMNT RPG, I would suggest thinking about all the games that you've played since then, and search for any plots you could use now or that you want to expand on.

The thing about the Turtles universe is that anything can happen, so nothing is over the top. I mean, the Turtles traveled in time and met alternate versions of themselves. It really is up to your imagination and the imagination of the group also. I am sure with just these simple ideas your group can play for years or until you reach Dimension X, whichever comes first.

Jamie Mosley is the former associate editor of Gaming Insurrection

A green guide to TMNT game sound

If there's ever a soundtrack that won't go away and reproduces quickly, it's the backing for Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles games. Seriously, these game soundtracks are the kind that won't

die.

The best?: TMNT IV: Turtles in Time. Toe-tapping catchy delights make up the score for the final entry before everything about the series started falling apart. All of the themes go with the game and sound TMNT-like, even the obnoxious battle theme that you will hear 10 times. At least it's consistently obnoxious.

The worst?: Anything on the GameBoy. This is by no means an indictment of the beautiful brainchild of the brilliant Gunpei Yokoi-san but some things were just not meant to be portable. TMNT falls squarely in that category. The music is small, tinny and barely recognizable as belonging with the TMNT universe. A blight if you will.

The rest? Serviceable at best. At its best is TMNT II: The Arcade Game in the 8-bit realm. It has the best and most recognizable tracks of all of the games. At its worst, are the 16-bit Genesis games. These make me want to cry, they are so bad. If you're going to copy from an arcade version, have the decency to do it right. Nothing is more frustrating than hearing the game equivalent of a bad house remix of late '80s power rock.

If you're going on sheer creativity, look at Turtles in Time. Chances are the zaniness of the game will provide something viable for your ears. Otherwise, be forewarned that if you're not a fan of the green foursome's eponymous 1987 cartoon, you will not enjoy the majority of the sound you're about to be assaulted with. You can't miss that theme since you're pounded over the head with it every time some TMNT-related media is produced. Thankfully, it's held up even after 20 years.

Lyndsey Hicks is editor-in-chief of Gaming Insurrection. She can be reached by email at editor@gaminginsurrection.com



Bad on the half shell

Original TMNT entry an awful experience

By **JAMIE MOSLEY**
GAMING INSURRECTION

The Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles will always remain an enigma in my childhood memories. I have always been very fond of them, whether it be from their delightful television show or cartoon videos — even the regular videos were pretty cool — to the comic books, there was something for everyone when it came to Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle merchandise.

One of the main plans launched at the height of the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle fad was a move into the video game market. Konami decided to release a bunch of TMNT games during the years, mainly for the NES and SNES consoles. Their first effort was a game of the same name for the NES in 1989. This was not a success.

Let me state for the record: I love the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. I loved the other games in the series, but the original Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles game just failed to capture the spirit of the others. I

believe that, while the game itself is horrible, it inspired the others later. While the other Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles were more action-oriented as side-scrolling beat-em-ups, this was more of an adventure game. It has its good moments, but overall I don't get it. Maybe it's just the type of game, maybe it's the boredom, maybe it's the fact I want to throw this game out a window ever time I see it; I don't know.

Take everything you knew about the other Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles games and throw them out a window. The gameplay is not fun. Most of it consists of fighting little purple guys that hardly resemble Foot soldiers at all. The bright spot of it all was the fact that you could switch Turtles at any time.

There really is no story if you think about it, but you can watch the short scenes before the game begins to find out all about it. The Turtles are returning home from a pizza run when they discover that someone has broken into their precious sewer! They enter and see Master Splinter and April O'Neil

have been kidnapped! Shredder must have taken them, so your mission is to save Master Splinter and April O'Neil! The game really presents itself with exclamation points so I thought this would be an appropriate way to tell my story the same way. It isn't the most unique story, but it's actually better than what I expected it would be.

The game's stages are rather revolutionary as there are no real set stages. Instead, you start off in a city map walking around avoiding Foot soldiers and tanks until you find an open sewer. You then can go into the sewer to complete the sewer portions. You will not spend the whole game in the sewers, though, as soon you will be swimming underwater, trying to detonate bombs. That was the most fun I had in the entire game, as it was fun to try to swim around while avoiding electric coral. NOT! There is nothing fun about trying to detonate bombs, avoid being shocked and fighting a current and time limit all at once in a game where you control worse than Mario Bros. It's a pain to move

around in the game, and this one section is the example of what not to do in a game. It's also the example of why the game is so bad.

The graphics are rather interesting, to say the least. I did like some, but not all, of the graphics. I didn't like the overall look, especially when you compare it to the franchise's other offerings on the NES. The backgrounds were especially disappointing; I had a rather tough time seeing the enemies because they were blending in with each stage.

While the backgrounds are perhaps the main fault of the game when it comes to graphics, they are certainly not the only flaw. The enemy or character designs also weren't up to snuff. None of the enemies even look close to their series counterparts, and some of the enemies are head-scratching inclusions that make wonder why they're even in the game to begin with.

And while the graphics are causing you to have nightmares, the music is nothing special, either.

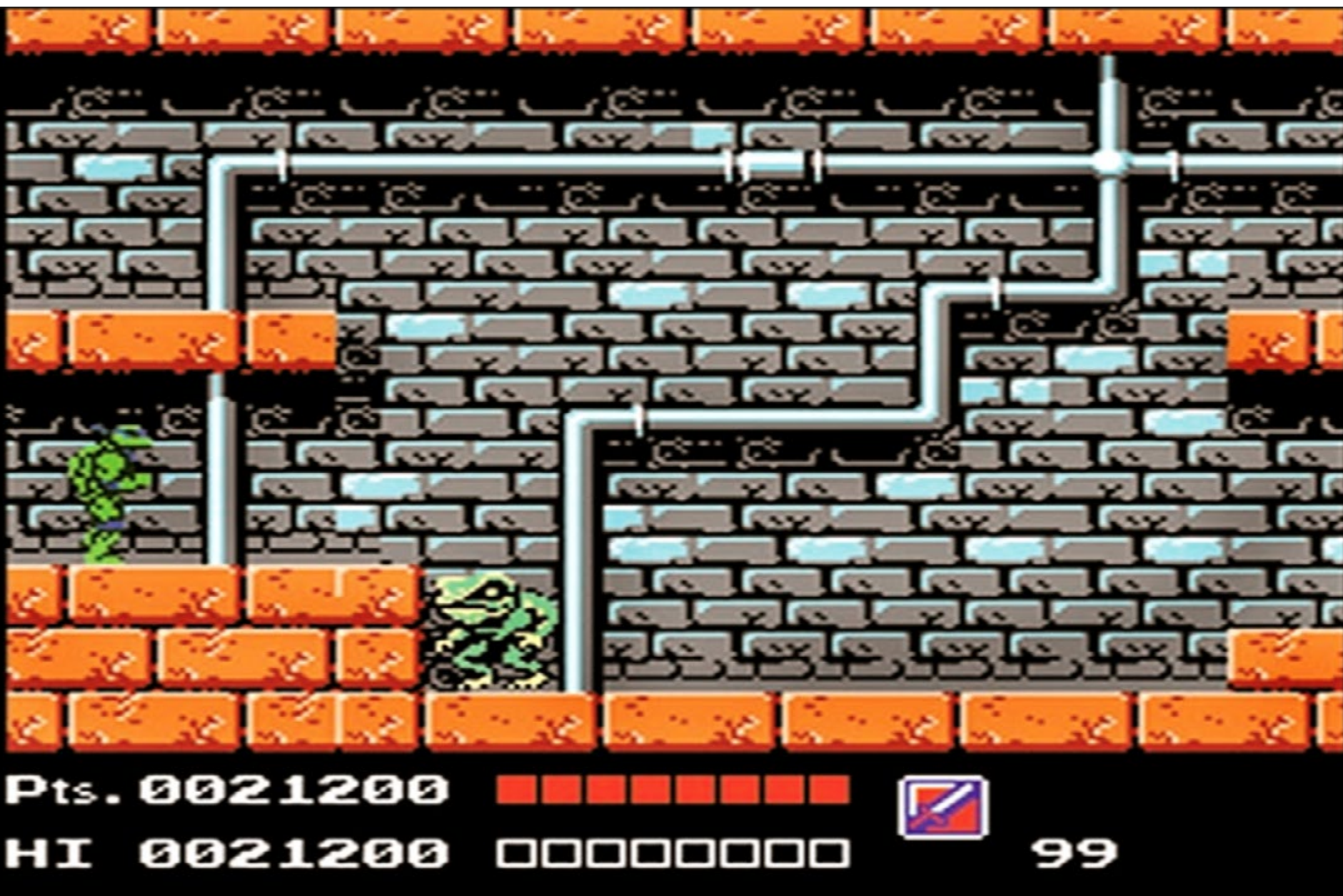
It's cool that that the classic Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles sound is present, but once you get into the actual stages, the music tends to get worse. I hated most of the music in most of the stages. The music just didn't do anything for me and it came across as annoying, disappointing and overall just plain off of the game's theme. If you can't listen to the music or enjoy the graphics, the least the game could do is have good controls, but it can't manage to do that either.

Controlling the Turtles in the game is rather simple with one button for jump and the other to swing your weapon, but simple design mistakes keep it from being the slightest bit fun. Why is switching weapons a chore? You're forced to go to the menu screen then switching around the weapons. I guess that's the only way that it can be done, because of the limited amount of buttons on the NES controller, but it's still ridiculous.

There is no replay value in TMNT. To say that this is the most challenging of all of the games in the NES series would be a bit of an understatement. The basic game play design that the game runs on means it will be challenging, mainly because the game requires a quick trigger finger and brains to figure out some of the more complex stages of the game. This wouldn't be so bad if not for the fact that sluggish controls and poor design gets in the way of execution. And on top of all of the nonsense you run through in the game, none of the bosses were even good. They're all a pain to deal with. I mean, you have to fight the Technodrome itself, for crying out loud. Who actually wants to do that?

If you completely ignore the fact that this is nothing like the other games in the series, you may end up liking this game a lot more. The fact of the matter is I have never really been a huge fan of TMNT and never will be. I expected the game to be fun, but that never came into the equation. Disappointment struck the entire time I waded through it, and there was no fun to be discovered whatsoever.

There are some good aspects to it, but mostly you'll be too busy being amazed at the mediocrity and laughable design. I won't call it the worst game ever made because it certainly is not, especially with crap like Silver Surfer and Total Recall running rampant. However, I can't recommend it, especially for those of you who are expecting a gaming experience like the TMNT arcade games. Run far away from this.



First is the worst: Stay away from first TMNT game on NES

By **BRANDON BEATTY**
GAMING INSURRECTION

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles started our favorite heroes in a half-shell on their to-tally awesome journey in the gaming world. However, this was also Konami/Ultra's first game based on a popular franchise that not only came

dangerously close to failure, but also nearly cause the lean, green machine to be banned from all things fun.

Released in 1989, TMNT is based on the 1987 TV series, but keeps with the style of the comic book series. TMNT starts with an

overhead view normally found in RPGs and switches between that and a side view similar to that of *The Legend of Zelda II*.

Full control — a la four-man tag-team — is allowed of all four Turtles, each with their signature weapons and personalities as they fight to rescue April O'Neil and Splinter. At the same time they must seek out Shredder and his infamous Technodrome fortress.

As a TMNT fan, I was enthusiastic about the green machines' video game debut. However, I soon learned firsthand that even with the hottest toy/comic property around, it does not guarantee a great video game.

While the RPG overhead screens were a

first in action games, unless you have the Turtle Van, Foot soldiers, and various Foot clan

vehicles will overcome the toughest turtle and his awesome weaponry.

The graphics were an example of how horrible Konami's dedication to this game's success was. I could not, in the first mid-stage battle, tell the difference between Bebop and April, thinking they were brother and sister.

The controls were simple but did not do justice to the Turtles as they were limited to back flips, upper and lower attacks, which took away the traits that make them ninja. Power-ups such as pizza and special weap-

ons such as

throwing stars keep with the TMNT theme, but do very little to save this game.

This game shows what we at GI do for you: review any game and suffer any horrible torture it brings to save not just your money but your sanity and time.

The consolation for TMNT fans is that Konami did learn from this game and improve their treatment in further TMNT games and other property-related games.

But as a learning experience: Do. Not. Buy. This. Game. You'll be greatly disappointed even if you are the biggest TMNT fan around.



Totally shell-shocking experience

By **JAMIE MOSLEY**
GAMING INSURRECTION

Editor's note: This review is for the arcade version of Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles II: The Arcade Game, which is featured in the Xbox Live Arcade. It is different than the NES port.

TMNT. These four letters have spawned a slew of games for one of the most popular cartoon television shows in the '80s and '90s. If you have never heard of or played this game, then let me tell you what you're missing and what makes Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles II: The Arcade Game a totally tubular game.

April and Splinter have been taken by Shredder and it's up to our mutant turtle friends to save them. Yeah, the plot is thin but this game is old and was an actual arcade title. It does, however, fit with the basic theme of the cartoon, which it was based upon.

Now, you have to consider that we are talking about 1989 here. Thus, you have the famous 2D side-scroller with all of the colors that you would see when watching your favorite green machines Saturday morning. All-original animations were included in the arcade game. The cooperative play is fun and challenging even with a limit on continues (19 continues ... \$5 in quarters ... you literally get what you pay for). You can play with

four friends on Xbox Live with full voice support or create rooms to invite friends to. One-player mode (local) allows you to learn the game with unlimited continues. It's an exact port of the original arcade game with no tampering to the music or visuals — a rarity today, but it's something I appreciate. It makes you feel like you are playing an episode of the original animated TV show.

GAME MECHANICS

The idea behind the game is run to the right and kill all of the enemies and then kill the boss. The variety of enemies might be lacking because of color changes but they also gain different weapons, so it does keep things interesting. The four turtles don't play exactly alike because of their weapons but it is close. I think Leo is a stronger all-around character but I prefer Don over Raph and Mikey. In on-line matches, you tend to get stuck with the weaker characters unless you are the host of the game.

Control-wise, you have a basic two-button scheme, one for jumping and the other for attacking. Pressing the two together allows you to perform a special move that will damage your foes even more. Movement is handled with the analog stick. There is no real hard learning curve here, and the con-

trol is simple and responsive.

Because of its popularity, I'm sure most people have played this game in one form or another. It's only got five stages long, which may seem shorter to some but that's because the NES version had two extra stages. On the NES, after the sewer level you go to an exclusive level called The Snowfield and the boss is a bounty hunter polar bear named Tora. Also after the Rock Quarry level, after beating Lieutenant Granitor, you enter another NES-exclusive level called The Dojo and fight a samurai named Shogun. These two were my least favorite levels, so it was no great loss

for me that they weren't included in this release of the game.

WORTH YOUR TIME?

This game is a must-have. From destroying the Foot clan to showing the evil Shredder who's boss, TMNT II is actually a really fun game to play. Even eating the turtles favorite Italian dish gives them a little sliver of health. The boss battles are fun to play as you will encounter the likes of Baxter Stockman, Rocksteady, Bebop, Shredder and more. Graphic-wise, the game is very clean. Yeah, it's old so it isn't overly impressive

but it looks better than the NES version. The sprites look good, the levels look great and even the fire effects look hot.

The music is fitting for this type of game. It uses voice work from the actors that did the cartoon, or so it would seem. Even the sound effects are good with explosions and what not. Had to give a high score on this. Everything from when they say "Pizza time to Rocksteady and Bebop's bad mouthing is all like the show itself and how can you ever forget the best theme song ever?

STATE OF PLAY

Achievements are not necessarily a breeze to get — you can only unlock them in public matches, not private. Some require you to complete the game in local mode and you to actually beat the final boss to unlock them. There is also a secret achievement; I suggest you try and figure it out on your own; it is much more fun that way!

One of the best-ever arcade games has finally come to the Xbox Live Arcade, and I must say you shouldn't miss out on the chance to play this sweet game.

If you are one of those people who remember only the theme song and can't remember that much about the show, or you're just itching for some TMNT action, add this game back to your collection. It's worth the price of nostalgia.

TMNT 3 a glowing learning curve

By **BRANDON BEATTY**
GAMING INSURRECTION

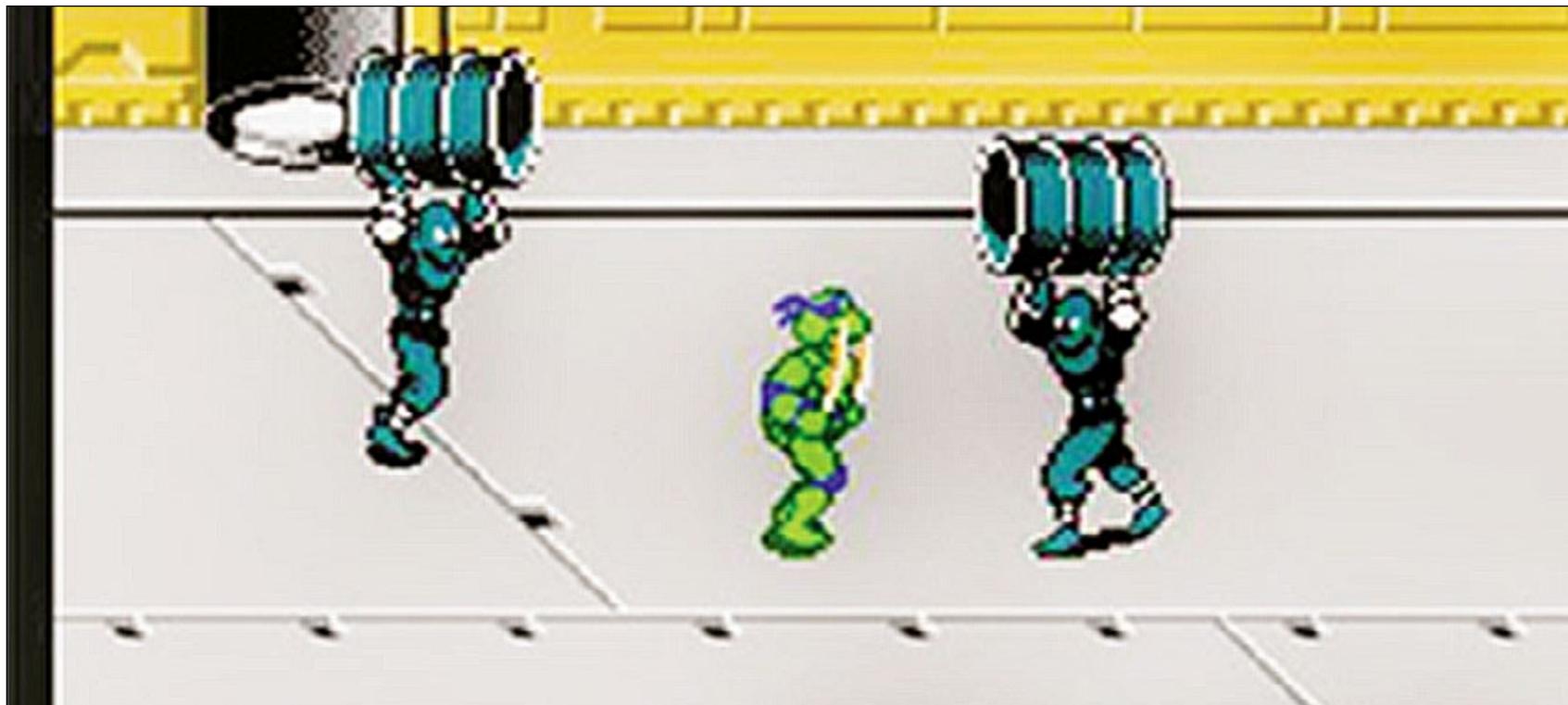
I showed no mercy to the first TMNT game; I was more than willing to smash that pathetic offering to our heroes in a half shell into unrecognizable pieces. However, Konami redeemed themselves with the TMNT faithful by releasing a third game that has our favorite green heroes fighting not just for justice this time but for their hometown from Shredhead's iron-fisted hands in Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles III: The Manhattan Project.

In this third Turtles project on the NES, the heroes and their sensei enjoying some well-deserved rest and relaxation on the beaches of sunny Florida. While watching April O'Neil's latest report, the green quartet sees Shredder taking over the news program, taking April hostage and turning New York City into a floating island while challenging the Turtles to stop him. Manhattan Project is, without a doubt, a true beat-em-up game that honestly fits with the comic and TV show better than first game and with more flexibility in its mechanics.

Instead of having all four turtles at once, you can choose your individual turtle in one- or two-player mode. Moves include the jump kick from the arcade game and also the ability to toss on-screen enemies into each other.

Each turtle has a specialized attack such as Mike's kangaroo kick and Leo's 360-degree turbine spin, which will be helpful though all eight levels. While playing, I did notice some things that were a minor pain with the special attacks such as using energy for the move unless you are down to one energy bar. Also, in cooperative mode, there the potential to hurt each other, unless you choose an option that will keep friendly fire to a minimum.

While no special weapons are available, the usual pizza powerups are on-hand. The usual rogue's gallery of TMNT is still intact with Foot soldiers, Mousers and Rock soldiers, but more villains from the comic and TV series are introduced such as Dirtbag, Slash and old favorites Bebop and Rocksteady. Also Super Shredder, Tokka and Rahzar from the second TMNT movie, Secret of the Ooze, make cameos. Konami did learn from the first TMNT game not to take the franchise's fans for granted. This lesson served them well in this game and also future TMNT-related games and other popular franchises where staying true pleases the fans. After playing this, I recognized that Konami has arrived to the fact that quality, not just quantity, will sell a game. Excellent, Konami. Excellent.





Time to discuss best-ever beat-em-up

By **LYNDESEY HICKS**
GAMING INSURRECTION

The best game in the series. Unparalleled beat-em-up action. SNES standard for side-scrollers. It is, indeed, Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles IV: Turtles in Time. Despite a lack of sophistication, this is a must-have in any TMNT collection. You can't be a TMNT fan and not play this version of the four green dudes' tale of saving their beloved New York City from the clutches of Shredder once again.

The story is as simple as the previous sentence. Shredder, Krang and their minions as well as rivals have taken to terrorizing New York City once again. You don't need much more than that and the game isn't going to work hard to give you much more than that. The game plays out much like any episode of the 1987 cartoon.

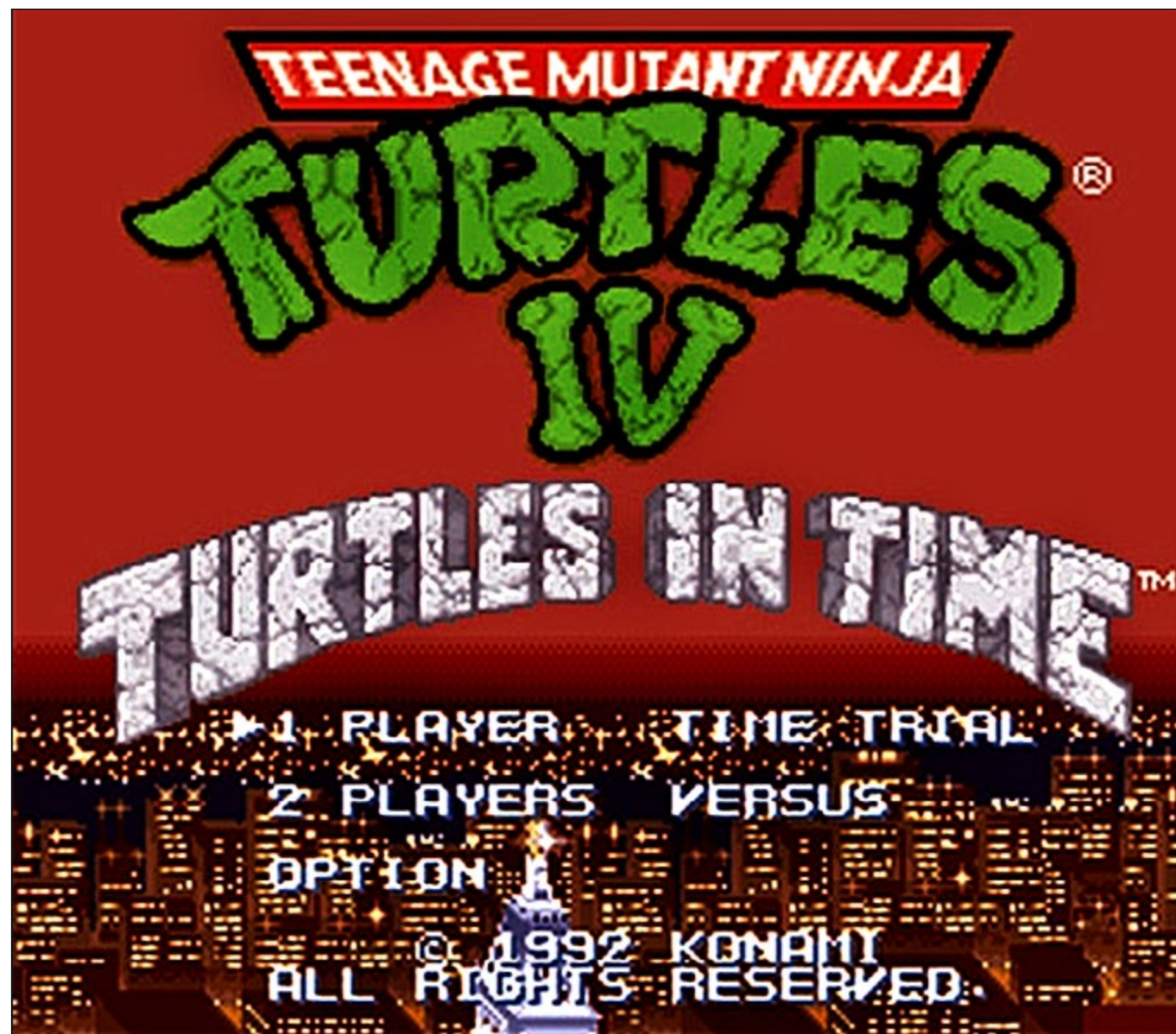
The 10 levels of the game are varied and interesting, transporting the green dudes to different epochs of time to fight their way back to home for a final showdown with the Shredhead. Bright and colorful palettes make up the scenery,

although there is an option to change to a gritty dark comic book style. It was a wise decision to let players move into the world of the TMNT, even when they're time traveling.

While you're moving through the different locales pursuing Shredder, the music makes the action come alive all on its own. The stages are memorable and the voice samples, though recycled from the Turtles' previous arcade entries, are clear and lively. Using the trademark surfer slang of the four gives the title identity and firmly entrenches it in the franchise's canon.

The game even manages to use dialogue from other Turtle properties. For instance, Tokka and Rahzar, two mutants from the second movie, are introduced with their quote "Master say have fun. Have fun." Longtime fans will recognize the attention to detail. And as far as unforgettable lines go, Shredder has one of the most famous in his pre-battle quote "Tonight I dine on turtle soup." Tell me if you know which season and which episode that came from.

The gameplay is nearly perfect.



TMNT 4 is the pinnacle of precise control from a company that brought you the first Castlevania. The Turtles move with fluidity and grace, which isn't easy when you're surrounded by enemies. That quirk of older beat-em-ups isn't present as much as it could be, thankfully. You can still be surrounded

by large groups that will take pot shots, but you can fight them off in a variety of ways. The new catapult throw makes creatively good use of the Super NES' Mode 7 capabilities and the body slam multi-throw is a good way to clear the screen for a little breathing room. Where the game falters slightly is its repeti-

tion and short length. Despite its 10 levels, it's really a lot of the same: Fight forward to the end of the stage. It's easy to beat the game in one sitting and that's on all difficulty levels.

It's made more fun when you have a buddy to back you up, but aside from the story campaign, there's little else to keep you engaged. There's time trials and a versus mode but they don't unlock anything so it's kind of a waste if you aren't into speed runs. So you'll be plodding through that story campaign, like it or not. Despite the minor annoyances, TMNT 4 is a must-own for the Super Nintendo. As a part of the Turtles' legacy, this is the definitive version of their struggle with the Foot Clan and Shredder.

As a part of the legacy of beat-em-up sidescrollers, this is the cream of the crop. Solid playability, great music, gorgeous backgrounds and a healthy nod to its history — it's everything that a franchise-based game should be.

Hyperstone Heist struggles mightily

Genesis port of classic steals much from source material

By **LYNDSEY HICKS**
GAMING INSURRECTION

Let's put this out in the open: The Sega Genesis version of Turtles in Time is Hyperstone Heist. Nearly everything in the game is the same as Turtles in Time. While plot-specific details are different, Hyperstone Heist is basically Turtles in Time with the names and order of the stages changed and a few bosses in different spots. The other major difference is the pirate ship background. But basically it's the same game, if not worse.

The sound quality is awful on the Genesis. The voice samples are scratchy, and the music sounds are muffled. Even though the files are pretty much the same as the Super Nintendo version, the translation from the arcade version of Turtles in Time distorted them. Quick, someone give these Turtles a throat lozenge.

And where the music suffers, the graphical quality also takes a hit. I have never seen more muddy and dreary graphics in a



game that recycles backgrounds. Take, for instance, the streets of New York stage. It's clearly the second stage of TMNT IV because it uses the same streets motif, yet it looks horrible on the Genesis. The colors are washed out and the definition and detail that was there is gone. Also, adding things to

the stage, such as cars that back out suddenly and run over your Turtle, didn't improve it. TMNT has never been at the top of the heap for graphics and this nonsensical port doesn't move the franchise ahead.

The storyline is basically Turtles in Time as well with a stone in place of the Statue of

Liberty being stolen. That's about it. Nothing really important. There will be fights against some random bosses from the franchise who really have no point in the game — Slash, we're looking at you — and then you face off against Shredder. That's it. At least it was fun and looked prettier on the SNES.

Several immediate questions came to mind as I trudged through the levels. First of all, who approved this? They should have been sacked immediately. Second, after playing through the first bonus stage, I ask: Why are the Foot soldiers jumping out of the water like synchronized swimmers or schools of fish? Third, did someone think this was cute? And actually play the game all the way through? Finally, was anyone informed of the fact that a better port exists on the SNES?

My major gripe overall is the obvious laziness that went into the port. I mean, it's clear that Genesis owners needed a TMNT game to match what SNES owners received but it seems that Konami shouldn't have bothered if what they're going to put out is a sub-par product.

If you have a choice in versions, do yourself a favor and buy the SNES version. Stay away from poor imitations that do nothing to move the TMNT franchise along.

Tournament Fighters doesn't win points for originality

Editor's note: This is a review of the Super Nintendo version of the game. This version is significantly different from the Genesis port.

By **LYNDSEY HICKS**
GAMING INSURRECTION

If Street Fighter II is the example of a fighting game template from which to steal, Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Tournament Fighters is the product of mediocrity that you leave alone. Tournament Fighters is basically SFII with TMNT characters and backgrounds slapped onto it. It's not bad, but it's not good, either. There's nothing worse from a game than obvious laziness, and TMNT Tournament Fighters barely manages to achieve that.

In a nutshell, the TMNT have

to take on their varied foes and friends in a tournament. That's all there is to the story. The game has a story mode and a versus mode, but other than that, there isn't much to the offerings. Getting to meat of the game: The fighting game portion isn't very good. It controls worse than old-school Street Fighter II but better than you'd expect a knock off to work. By the time this title hit the streets in 1993, SFII was hitting its stride, so Konami should have known better. The moves aren't precise and what you put in motion-wise isn't necessarily what you're going to get. It's like attempting to play Wii Sports Bowling while drunk and with the original Wiimote: not a good combination by any means, and somebody's bound

to get hurt.

While the game doesn't necessarily look horrible, it ain't pretty, either. There's color but it looks washed out and doesn't have the richness or clarity of its predecessor Turtles in Time. While the backgrounds are slightly imaginative, the animation isn't particularly special. The shining moment for this is the attention to detail. While the coloring is odd, the backgrounds do have a certain level of finesse. The ripples in, for instance, the Turtles' limbs and Shredder's clothes actually look fairly good. It's just that, for a 16-bit title, the graphics are boring. That's a shame because it could really use something to make it stand out in the crowd of fighting games for the Super Nintendo.



Nothing about this game does anything remarkable in terms of boosting the TMNT franchise. That's probably a lot of pressure on Tournament Fighters but if you can afford to make a fighting game spinoff from your franchise, it needs to do something more than look semi-pretty; it needs to bring something to the table. Tourna-

ment Fighters just doesn't do that as a TMNT spinoff or as a fighting game in a market that required elbow-room. The question that begs to be asked is this: Why play a Street Fighter II knockoff with boring graphics and imprecise controls when you could play the real thing? Inquiring Turtles fans really would like to know.

GAMEBOY QUICK HITS

TMNT: FALL OF THE FOOT CLAN

As far as left-to-right side-scrolling action platformers go, this isn't particularly good. It has promise as a GameBoy title but falls short with awful, tinny music and sad graphics. Storyline-wise, it follows the plot of its console big brothers wherein the Turtles must fight hordes of the Foot, face off against Shredder and Krang and finally save their friend April O'Neil. The controls, while simplified, leave a lot to be desired. Jumping is chore and with multiple enemies coming from all sides, it's hard to attack and not be attacked. Unfair hits will happen.

Rating: 1.5 out of 5



TMNTII: BACK FROM THE SEWERS

If you thought Fall of the Foot Clan couldn't get any worse, along comes the Turtles' second game for GameBoy. It's a lot of retread and the graphics only slightly get better. Most of the bosses even return, with Krang again serving as the game's final boss. The music is still not that great and the premise is still go here, rescue this person, don't get captured. The controls are still flighty but it's no worse than what you'd expect from a platformer on a handheld. Get this only if you feel the need to have all of the Turtles' adventures on one system.

Rating: 1 out of 5



TMNT III: RADICAL RESCUE

At this point, the Turtles are really stretching the credibility of the franchise. Nothing new is added here. So Konami decided to change the play style a little bit by making you roam around in a large cave to fight bosses? That still doesn't change the fact that the handheld Turtle games are singularly some of the worst the GameBoy has to offer. While the graphics have again slightly improved, they still aren't up to par with even the NES offerings. The music is still bad, and to make matters worse, the controls seem to have downgraded. In addition to the lack of advancement in the series, the physical act of forcing players to run around a large confusing map with limited health is one of the most egregious crimes you can commit in a side-scrolling platformer. This is quite possibly one of the worst games ever made.

Rating: 0 out of 5



Animated heroes, ad juggernaut rolled into giant package

The Teenage Mutant Turtles have dual personalities, quite frankly. They are among the few, if not the only, animated characters to have multiple versions within the consumer's grasp that make them seem like the same old Turtles dressed up in the same old stories with different looks to them.

No one can dispute the juggernaut that was and still is the TMNT. Sure, they're nowhere near as prevalent as they once were. Nowadays, you can't walk down the street screaming "Cowabunga, dude!" without getting laughed at or possibly being evaluated for Bull Street or Patrick B. Harris. No, you can't say you love being a turtle anymore without accusations of being stuck in a 1980s timewarp. But there was a time in America where it was hip to be a lean, green, turtle-loving pizza-eating machine. Those were the days when TMNT was king.

The franchise seemingly came out of nowhere with the comics book in 1984. It was as if there was nothing and then there were the Turtles. They were serious, starkly drawn characters who would fight and kill just as soon as they would be teens on the streets of New York looking for a little action. These are the classic times of the TMNT, where you could get a little blood mixed in with the culture of a gritty 1980s New York City scene rife with crime. And then it all exploded.

Cheesy on the one hand, wildly popular and inappropriate on the other, the 1987 animated show hit the scene and made mincemeat out of nearly every other franchise. The Turtles gained individual characteristics and with them came an increase in popularity that hadn't been anticipated. The show took



off with witty writing, superb voice acting and plots that made a lot of sense. The show worked hard to establish a base with children, though the seemingly innocuous writing is even risqué for cartoons these days. Where else can a villain call a heroine of the show a bimbo?

Both pieces of the TMNT tale left a lasting impact. There's a generation of grown folks that sang along with the opening theme of the '87 show. Millions of "children of the '80s" sink back into a coma of nostalgia now and then as they remember getting home from school, throwing off an acid-wash denim jacket, fixing a snack and plopping down in front of a TV to watch the four green dudes from Brooklyn take on a ninja master who "never has to look for a can opener" before tackling multiplication and long-division problems.

I am a child of the '80s and I was once upon a time a pre-teenage mutant ninja turtle.

Lyndsey Hicks is editor-in-chief of Gaming Insurrection and one of the biggest Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles fans on the planet. She can be reached by email at gicomics@gaminginsurrection.com

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles New Line Cinema, 1990

TMNT movie origins great way to start franchise

Pulling from the comics to tell its origin story, Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles does the franchise proud in its first stab at the movie business. With a few changes to some key elements, the movie Turtles still manage to convey the never-say-die attitude of the teen amphibians. Crucial fights and subtle humor are thrown in with great character development.

The casting is superb mostly. Judith Hoag was excellent as the plucky April O'Neil, and her pairing with Elias Koteas' Casey Jones was enjoyable and believable. Shredder was menacing and imposing as well as his bodyguard, Tatsu (a movie only addition). The costuming looked great and so did the Turtles. Jim Henson's Creature Factory pulled out the stops to make the suits for the Turtles, and it shows. Our only quibble with the characterization was the inclusion and creation of April's boss and his son. They weren't wholly necessary to the story, and while they set up interesting subplots for the core group, they didn't really add to the movie. In fact, it seems they dragged it down in parts.

We particularly enjoyed the fact that by the time the first movie was released, the cartoon was in full swing, thus making the movie possible. While the movie works to distance itself from the cartoon quite a bit, it still retains elements from it to draw in the younger crowd. Subtle nods to the franchise's two origins (comics and



HOW WE GRADE

We score the properties in three categories: Casting (or voice acting in cases of animated), plot and similarities to its source material. Each category receives points out of the maximum of 10 per category and 30 overall. The percentage is the final score.

cartoon) are featured throughout, helping the movie firmly ground itself as a sci-fi kung-fu flick. This is a must-own for the children of the '80s crowd who remembers the days when Turtles fought with honor.

Like the comics: 7
Casting: 9.5
Plot: 9

Overall rating: 8.5





PHOTO COURTESY OF TMNT.COM
Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles were aided by their new friend Keno in TMNT II: Secret of the Ooze.

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles II: Secret Of The Ooze
 New Line Cinema, 1991

One-liners add hilarity to Turtles' movie sequel

What's not to like about the sequel to one of the most successful independent movies of all time? Not much. Everything that made the first film a year earlier successful is back, though with a few changes. First, there's no Casey Jones. And the actress playing April was changed. And there's the addition of Ernie Reyes Jr. as the Turtles' friend Keno and villains Tokka and Razhar. But other than that, the Turtles are still the Turtles.

There's more action and more one-liners. And the return of Shredder makes it a little bit more believable that he's a major villain for the Turtles than the comics would have you believe. It's not very plausible that Shredder would be a one-note villain who only appears in a movie to try to kill the heroes, so it's obvious that his role was increased here, tying in the various games AND

HOW WE GRADE

We score the properties in three categories: Casting (or voice acting in cases of animated), plot and similarities to its source material. Each category receives points out of the maximum of 10 per category and 30 overall. The percentage is the final score.

cartoon.

Character development was handled in the first movie and not too much is dwelled on here. We wish more was written about Keno and why he was so proficient in martial arts and insistent upon helping the Turtles. His lack of explanation sticks out like a sore thumb in an otherwise excel-

lent tale for the Turtles. Also, is it too much to ask that Vanilla Ice should have been toned down? True, he doesn't show up until the end, but really, Ninja Rap? It was odd and disconcerting as a child seeing him and that hasn't changed in the 20 years since the movie's release. He does absolutely nothing for the film, and his cameo is beyond stupid. But, at least the Turtles got to dance.

Overall, watch the sequel if not for a laugh at the now-ancient fashions of the day, but for the ramped up humor that comes from creating a sequel for a TMNT movie.

Like the comics?: 5
Casting: 8
Plot: 7
Overall rating: 6.5

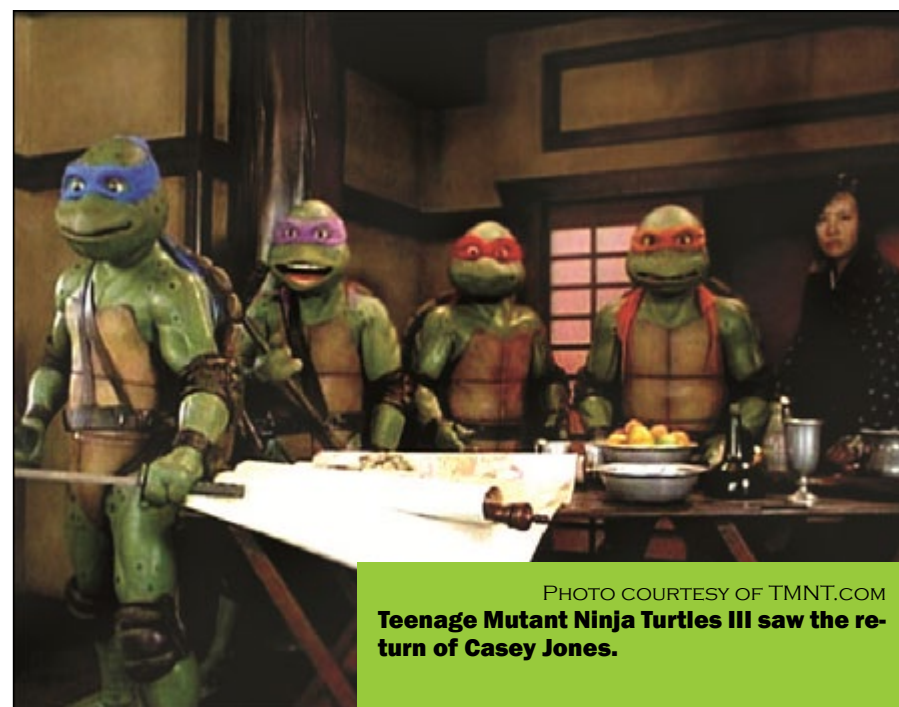


PHOTO COURTESY OF TMNT.COM
Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles III saw the return of Casey Jones.

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles III
 New Line Cinema, 1992

Boldly go where no Turtle should really ever go

A hackneyed plot and poor special effects make the third TMNT film the worst in the bunch. There isn't much that could save the franchise from going downhill with the third movie. The plot of the Turtles time traveling literally doesn't make much sense, and the first time that Lyndsey saw it in the theaters, she claims to have spent 20 minutes trying to make sure she was in the right movie.

The acting is garbage, the story is utter nonsense and has nothing to do with the TMNT universe, and there's no mention of previous villains or characters that made an impact on the Turtles' adventures. The bright spot in it all is the casting and return of Elias Koteas as Casey Jones. He, despite some ham-fisted acting, is a beacon of hope in a movie that is far from shimmering.

There is nothing here that really resembles the TMNT universe save the abandoned train system home that the Turtles found in Secret of the Ooze and Jones. We had trouble understanding the point of adding the scepter and why even

HOW WE GRADE

We score the properties in three categories: Casting (or voice acting in cases of animated), plot and similarities to its source material. Each category receives points out of the maximum of 10 per category and 30 overall. The percentage is the final score.

some of the strange plots from the cartoon universe weren't expanded on, such as the Utroms or Rocksteady and Bebop. If the movie can introduce samurai that we've never heard of, the least the writers could do is include mutants that we have heard of. This is one sewer tale that should have stayed underground.

Like the comics?: 0
Casting: 2
Plot: 2

Overall rating: 1.5



**GAMING INSURRECTION
 DOES COMICS**



TOP 5 ON THE STRIP — SHREDDER QUOTES EDITION

Oroku Saki. Villain. Genius. Comedic mastermind? The 1987 animated version of the Shredder was crucial to the mood, tone and popularity of the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. Whether it was James Avery's classic quick delivery or the timing of a well-placed oral jab to those Turtle boys, Shredder always seemed one step ahead in his plans and his verbal jousts. Here are five of the best one-liners from "guy who never has to look for a can opener."

1 "Tonight I dine on turtle soup."

The penultimate quote has made its way into the 1987 animated show, the comic and the games.



2 "Sayonara, you shell-backed simpletons."

This insult, thrown out to the Turtles as Shredder was getting away for the millionth time, made Lindsey pause a VHS and ask her mom: 1. What is a simpleton? 2. What does sayonara mean? and 3. Why is Shredder so awesome? Educational and inspiring.



3 "I borrowed your Alien Express card. I never leave the Technodrome without it."

Referring to co-conspirator Krang's ability to pay for technology, Shredder evoked modern advertisement to explain how he gets away with borrowing stuff and never paying for it during the seven seasons he wreaked havoc on New York City.



4 "Blast that grotesque ganglion!"

A nice way to refer to Krang. Shredder was capable of big words that required viewers to think. It's nice to have an intelligent super villain who could make you laugh while hatching world domination plans.



5 "Creatins," "Blasted turtles," "Fools," "Wretched reptiles," "Idiot(s)"

Shredder's favorite words to describe his help, his nemesis and his help. In that order. Watch a video of his quotes on YouTube and these will show up quite often.

TMNT CODES

TMNT (NES)

ZENOATGO Pick up 10 weapons only
ZUNOATGP Pick up 50 weapons
GXSOUAST No damage from most enemies
SXVZGSOO No damage from non-killing seaweed
AEOOGTZA Full energy from pizza slices
GPUOLNZA 20 missiles on pick-up
TAKOPYLA Double rope on pick-up
SXVXTLVG Never lose rope

TMNT II: ARCADE

| | |
|-------------------------------|----------|
| Start with 1 life | PEOIAPZA |
| Start with 6 lives | TEOIAPZA |
| Start with 9 lives | PEOIAPZE |
| Infinite lives | AAEAULPA |
| More powerful weapon | PEXTKZZE |
| More powerful 'jump + attack' | PEOVKZGE |
| Weaker 'jump + attack' | ZEOVKZGA |
| More powerful kick | PEXTEZLE |
| Weaker kick | PEXTEZLA |

In two-turtle mode, when one player is revived the other player's spare life won't get used up
SXEAPZVG-SZUAYZVG

TMNT III: MANHATTAN PROJECT

| | |
|----------|--|
| AENKLZPA | Infinite lives |
| AEOAALLA | Start with 1 life |
| IEOAALLA | Start with 6 lives |
| AEOAALLE | Start with 9 lives |
| AAESYXAA | No energy loss from using turbo attack |
| ALUGVYAG | High jump |
| AZUGVYAK | Super jump |
| AZUGVYAG | Mega jump |
| SXNSKKVK | Infinite continues |
| PAUZOGLE | 1 continue |
| PAUZOGLE | 9 continues |
| SLXUTXVS | Infinite energy |
| SLKXPKSO | |

TMNT IV

PRO-ACTION REPLAY CODES

7E1AA00X P1
7E1AE00X P2
X= Number of lives. For unlimited

lives, leave switch on.
7E044A50 P1
7E04BA50 P2
When Action Replay is switched on, health is restored.
7E00820X Start from any level. Use 0 in place of X for level 1, 1 for level 2 etc.
7E044A56 Infinite health

GAME GENIE CODES

892F-0DD7 Protection against most enemy attacks
DDAC-6F67 Infinite lives
26C4-640F Enable Round Select
When using the start with lives codes, don't change the lives setting on the options screen
DD28-67D9 Start with 1 life
D028-67D9 Start with 5 lives
DB28-67D9 Start with 10 lives
4028-67D9 Start with 25 lives
0B28-67D9 Start with 50 lives
5028-67D9 Start with 75 lives
BB28-67D9 Start with 100 lives

TMNT: HYPERSTONE

Player 1 starts with 1 life
RFWA-C6VA-9VWA-DGKC-ABWA-CABE
Player 1 starts with 10 lives
RFWA-C6VA-9VWA-DGKC-BFWA-CABE
Player 1 starts with 25 lives
RFWA-C6VA-9VWA-DGKC-EVWA-CABE
Player 1 starts with 50 lives
RFWA-C6VA-9VWA-DGKC-KFWA-CABE
Player 1 starts with 75 lives
RFWA-C6VA-9VWA-DGKC-RVWA-CABE

Player 1 starts with 100 lives
RFWA-C6VA-9VWA-DGKC-XFWA-CABE
Player 2 starts with 1 life
RFWA-C6VL-9VWA-DGKN-ABWA-CABR
Player 2 starts with 10 lives
RFWA-C6VL-9VWA-DGKN-BFWA-CABR
Player 2 starts with 25 lives
RFWA-C6VL-9VWA-DGKN-EVWA-CABR
Player 2 starts with 50 lives
RFWA-C6VL-9VWA-DGKN-KFWA-CABR

Player 2 starts with 75 lives
RFWA-C6VL-9VWA-DGKN-KFWA-CABR
Player 2 starts with 100 lives
RFWA-C6VL-9VWA-DGKN-XFWA-CABR
Infinite Lives (Player 1)
ADCT-CAGC
Infinite Lives (Player 2)
ADFA-CAB2
Both players invincible
RHST-C6YG
Deadly attack uses no life points (Player 1): BXYA-CA2G
Deadly attack uses no life points (Player 2): BXYT-CA2G
Untouchable
ADST-CPEG
All characters flash
ADST-CS42
You can highlight two players
RVHT-C9PN
All turtles have Leo's weapon
ASCT-CAYT
All turtles jump fast
AX6T-CAWW
Enemies get hit near Donatello
AXRT-CAWY
Start with ?? lives modifier
??TT-DAEY
?? = lives when you start.

AF - 12 Lives
BK - 32 Lives
AK - 68 Lives
Start with ?? lives modifier (Alternate)
??TT-DAE0
?? = lives when you start.
DB - 22 Lives
GB - 23 Lives
CB - 33 Lives
EB - 42 Lives
BB - 44 Lives
AB - 55 Lives
Activates stage select
AB1T-CN5A

TMNT GAMEBOY

FALL OF THE FOOT CLAN

017-B6F-E6A Turtles never get captured
*=After 1st Turtle
027-AAF-C4A *Start with 2 energy units
047-AAF-C4A *Start with 4 energy units
067-AAF-C4A *Start with 6 energy units

BACK FROM THE SEWERS

Infinite energy
001-B6B-3BE
Start with 3 energy points
033-65E-D5A
Start with 6 energy points
063-65E-D5A
Start with 9 energy points
093-65E-D5A
Pizza raises energy by only 1
0E8-BD8-802
018-BE8-D57
Pizza increases energy by 6
0E8-BD8-802
068-BE8-D57
Pizza increases energy by 9
0E8-BD8-802
098-BE8-D57
Pizza completely restores energy
0E8-BD8-802
0C8-BE8-D57
Start on act 2 3E3-8AE-6EA/013-8BE-E66
Start on act 3 3E3-8AE-6EA/023-8BE-E66
Start on act 4 3E3-8AE-6EA/033-8BE-E66
Start on act 5 3E3-8AE-6EA/043-8BE-E66
Start on act 6 3E3-8AE-6EA/053-8BE-E66

RADICAL RESCUE

Game Genie codes

Infinite Health
FA3-99D

Gameshark codes

Infinite lives
0103FAC0
One hit kill boss
0100CDC0

TMNT: TOURNAMENT FIGHTERS

F6E9-3D25 Both players start with 1/4 health
7DE9-3D25 Both players start with 1/2 health
06E9-3D25 Both players start with 3/4 health
DDB1-CF60 Start with no continues [leave menu option on 3]
D4B1-CF60 Start with 1 continue
D0B1-CF60 Start with 3 continues
D1B1-CF60 Start with 5 continues
D6B1-CF60 Start with 7 continues

82A6-4FA4 Automatic and infinite continues
FD86-4F00 Matches are 10 seconds [leave menu option on 60]
F986-4F00 Matches are 15 seconds [leave menu option on 60]
4D86-4F00 Matches are 20 seconds [leave menu option on 60]
5986-4F00 Matches are 75 seconds [leave menu option on 60]
DDC1-1D03 Energy bar doesn't go down over time
D4C1-1D03 Energy bar goes down twice as fast

For the following codes, do not combine with "After an ultimate attack, energy bar goes to about ? codes.)
DFCA-44A3 Ultimate attack can be done any time bar isn't empty
FOCA-44A3 Ultimate attack can be done with about 1/4 energy
46CA-44A3 Ultimate attack can be done with about 1/2 energy
7ACA-44A3 Ultimate attack can be done with about 3/4 energy

For the following codes, do not combine with "Ultimate attack can be done any time the bar is ? codes.)
FOC3-4463 After an ultimate attack, energy bar goes to about 1/4
46C3-4463 After an ultimate attack, energy bar goes to about 1/2
7AC3-4463 After an ultimate attack, energy bar goes to about 3/4

Character mods

The following codes do not work in story mode and can't view ending.

DCCA-1405 Leonardo is replaced by Rat King
D8CA-1405 Leonardo is replaced by Karai
DCCA-14A5 Raphael is replaced by Rat King
D8CA-14A5 Raphael is replaced by Karai
DCCA-1705 Donatello is replaced by Rat King
D8CA-1705 Donatello is replaced by Karai

*Codes are courtesy of
gamehacking.org*