PlayTrains

*Fixed a few grammar issues as well as added in what I took from learning on Playwriting and how I can use it for myself in the future whenever needed. Also saying how I used to hate writing but said that playwriting changed my view on that.*

There was a time around 2nd grade when I was a small kid and I vaguely remember having a writing assignment that my class had for spring break. It was to write a small book or story about anything that you want. It could be on what you did over the break, what is your favorite food, book, movie, etc. Before given this assignment, I went downtown to visit the transit museum with my aunt because I really had an interest for trains. Everyday when going to elementary school, middle school, my first year of high school and even college, I would always ride the train. Not just going to school though, pretty much anywhere else going downtown or uptown. By myself or with my family. Although, I did lose my interest in trains a while ago because of video games and learning that working at the MTA doesn’t make you that money, it just sort of drifted off. It’s still something I hold close to me. I went down to the transit museum during one weekend and had a look around of how the trains worked and even saw some old model trains from when the system first began. There was also one part for the buses but that wasn’t what I was into. A little while after leaving, I started working on the book about trains and what I learned about them. At this point, I don’t recall what I wrote on it and I’m not sure if I even have the book on me anymore due to the amount of spring cleaning from then to now. All I know is that upon giving the book, the 2nd grade teachers were excited and loved the book. I did like writing sometimes when I was younger and I still do now to a degree, especially in high school when I wrote plays for playwriting class. In high school, I had playwriting for about 2 years. It was getting a little repetitive around the 2nd year, but I sucked it up and went along with it. Before even being put in playwriting, I hated writing. Never liked it because I was never able to write that well. However, when I got into playwriting, my view on that changed right away. In playwriting, we had free reign to write plays about anything we want, with the expectation that there isn’t too much cursing in them. My teacher didn’t really like cursing being overused, however using 1 or 2 is fine. During my time in that class, I had written about 4 plays and even had some of them performed by other classmates. Sadly, it never really made it to be a fully acted play as other plays were favored because of friends, but I still enjoyed making them. I took my time with them making sure if made sense, no grammar errors, soft flowing, everything. The longest play I made was around 22 pages. I still have thankfully due to them being on the internet, so if I need any inspirations, I’ll just look at my old plays. I did learn over the years that I can write anything I want whenever I want. One thing that I know that I can take away from this is that I can write about anything I please whenever I want when it comes to mind. I could write about the ocean, the earth or even about my family and still feel good about it. Even if it makes no sense or questionable, it’s me writing it, not anyone else, I know what it’s truly about. Playwriting really opened that up for me as I enjoyed writing plays. Hopefully, I can learn a lot more about structure in this class and use that to my advantage, even if it doesn’t fit well with whatever is being presented.

Movie Review - 6 Reviewers, 6 Movies

*Added in more detail to who these people were and what they did, as well as giving more detail about what happened with certain movies after this was originally finished. Also some grammar fixes.*

Any form of media, such as newspapers, music, videos, books and even movies are things people enjoy, as well as things some people don’t enjoy. There are also people who can’t decide and may need help with that. Luckily, there are people that help them decide by not just telling them, but explaining it, in great detail. Either by writing in a newspaper or a prompt on a website online. Sometimes, one person's writing can change the minds of no one, or a million. It really depends on the audience they are trying to reach out to the most, and tell them how this one thing is good or bad. Although, some people just tell them not to see a movie no matter what even if these critics say that it's one of the best movies they ever saw just because that person telling them didn’t like it.

A.O. Scott (Joker 2019): A.O Scott has been reviewing movies since 2000 and was later picked up by the New York Times where he can give his insight on movies to whatever audience the movie is towards. Joker is currently at the top of the box office as of October 10th, 2019, and people are saying it's one of the best movies they had ever seen, some saying the opposite, with words such as bland or bleak and others saying not to take your kids to it. One reviewer opens up with "*Are you kidding me?"* As said in a post on the [New York Times](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/03/movies/joker-review.html), the reviewer states that the title is at first just a boring title. Expecting the Joker to be much more dangerous and "clowney", but instead says that it's: "*an empty, foggy exercise in second-hand style and second-rate philosophizing".* Also saying that the movie doesn't come out of its shadow or is too scared to. He just finds the movie to be unfunny and boring, and wonders if that's the joke hidden within the movie. Despite his claims on the movie being uninteresting, it went on to become the highest grossing R-rated movie of all time. However, after a few months of the movie being released, it became one of the biggest R-rated movies of all time and even talk about a sequel in the works.

Roger Ebert (The Lost World: Jurassic Park 1997): Roger Ebert is one of the most famous movie reviewers looking at old and modern movies. He was well known by many people and directors, and always gave a fair insight and review on any movie that he saw. He sadly passed away in 2013, but is still seen as the best that the industry had to offer. Back in 1997, Jurassic Park had received a sequel to the original Jurassic Park movie in 1993. On his website [rogerebert.com](https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/the-lost-world-jurassic-park-1997), he starts off by saying that the movie doesn't start with the same awe that the first movie had, how it doesn't have that same feeling as what would happen if dinosaurs still roamed the earth and that how the humans in the movie didn't deliver the same amount of input as they were just there for plot conventions or cheap action shots. He found the structure to be weird and didn't enjoy it, thinking one thing was over but it wasn't. He saw this movie as a disappointment to the first movie and thought that Steven Spielberg didn't have enough time to revise it. Either way, he shows that he didn't like it as much as the first movie and wished it could have been done better.

Justin Chang (Terminator: Dark Fate 2019): Justin Chang is a known movie critic for the L.A Times, getting early showings of movies that aren't out yet to give some early insight to those who may want to see the movie or not. Beforehand, he worked for Variety before being picked up by the L.A Times. At the moment, he does top 10 movies of the current year as well as other movies that are coming soon to theaters. Recently, he reviewed the newest Terminator: Dark Fate movie that is set to come out on November 1st, and says on the [L.A. Times](https://www.latimes.com/entertainment-arts/movies/story/2019-10-22/terminator-dark-fate-review-arnold-schwarzenegger-linda-hamilton), probably the best Terminator sequel in 20 years. He says that the movie is a tie in to the 2nd movie back in 1991, almost 30 years later giving it the proper sequel that it deserves. He goes on to explain that it is a good movie in which Schwarzenegger is once again back onto the acting scene with his signature terminator character. Despite Justin Chang saying this is one of the best movies in the series, it was later shown to be one of the WORST movies instead. Even when some people say the movie is good, loads of other people say otherwise.

Michael Cavna (Finding Dory 2016): Michael Phillips is reviewer for the Chicago Tribune, in which here reviewed Finding Dory, which is a sequel to Finding Nemo released back in 2003. On the [Chicago Tribune](https://www.chicagotribune.com/entertainment/movies/ct-finding-dory-finding-nemo-disabilities-20160617-story.html), he explains how he saw the movie in his own words. To start off, he found it to be a satisfying follow-up, explaining that bringing back old movies can still bring back good memories to the original, even if it’s bad. He also finds the personality very vivid and bright but not so much with story with some errors, stating that going from a marine institution to dry land was a weird change of pace for some action. Which was absent in Finding Nemo with only the ending having to do anything with dry land. He finds the movie fantastic and a great follow up from the 2003 movie, as well as him stating that it deals great with those who have disabilities in a charming way. This is a good movie for those with disabilities as it shows how they can impact one’s life in a good and funny way and not in a patronizing way, making them seem annoying and unpleasant. Here? They do it in a good way according to Michael.

Leonard Maltin (Toy Story 3 2010): Leonard Maltin is a well known critic for his work on reviewing old popular movies. In reviewing Toy Story 3, on his own [website](https://leonardmaltin.com/film-review-toy-story-3/), he begins by saying that it is one of the greatest movies of its time. The amount of work, creativity and imagination that is possible with it is what made Toy Story 3 great in his eyes. He finds its strongest aspect to be the main stars, Woody, Buzz, Jessie, Mr. Potato Head, all the familiar characters from previous movies, still the same and funny as ever. Even finding the ending quite dark and pulling on people’s heartstrings, he found it to be a really good tie in towards the Toy Story series. Even with the story changing tones very fast along with new characters having a bad meaning, it always seems to come out with a wholesome or good ending to leave a movie with. Maybe even the whole series as people thought 3 was going to be the final one. Leonard Maltin does review the 4th one, but that’s for another time. He gives the movie a good rating with its amazing plot and ending.

Pauline Kael (GoodFellas 1990): Pauline Kael was known for her quotes about certain movies, such as the GodFather, JAWS and GoodFellas. For this one, she reviews GoodFellas, a 1990 crime movie loosely based on the GodFather. Some people gave this movie a good rating, however for Pauline, she didn’t find the movie all that great with a number of reasons. On the [New Yorker](https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/1990/09/24/tumescence-as-style), she first asks the question if it is a great movie. She doesn’t think so, but finds it to be a triumphant piece of filmmaking, having each frame just being active and vivid, as well as knowing that the director loved what he was making when these pictures were moving. She likes how it looks, but not how it is structured with its characters. One point is with a guy named Henry reacts to Tommy and Jimmy’s act of violence with a puzzled expression, and not scared or angry one. Another with Joe Pesci’s character shooting a teenager who was slow with serving a drink. She didn’t like how they were, which is what caused her to not find the movie all that great to those adults who want to see it.

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Video games do not cause real life violence

*Made it a bit more cleaner to read and fixed up sentences that didn’t fit or made no sense to what I was trying to put.*

Ever since video games became mainstream around the world, those in the upper class, including politics and even the president himself have deemed video games the main source of gun related crimes. No matter what, they are quick to jump the gun and blame video games as a whole, even if there are other reasons that a certain crime might have happened. Despite them saying all of this, many researchers took turns with this and found no link at all between those crimes and video games, especially violent ones. By nature, games would instead release stress and can calm you down depending on how you play said game. This not only affects those who create the games, but those who play said games and if they decide to ban these types of video games, the economy will then begin to suffer, as video games company’s own a number of stocks in the market. The type of games that are mainly at blame are shooters, gory games, mainly just games that are rated M. However, politics are vague about it and say ALL games are to blame. A rating system exist to see if a game is fit for all ages or only for certain groups of people above a said age, say over 10 or 16 years old. The company the makes the games have to be within a set of guidelines in order for a game to have a certain rating on it, they are aware of what’s in their game. However, they cannot predict crimes or shooting at all and all the time, the game has nothing to do with it. If politics blame that game for what has happened, it can destroy their reputation and cause them to lose money, even if it had nothing to do with them. This will in turn, also hurt the economy and those who play that specific game. A number of cases have been done by a number of originations to see if there is any link between violent video games and violent crimes.

When news comes out about a huge crime or incident, regarding either murderer or robbery, people and mostly politics quickly blame video games for the cause. In this case, those who play video games all the time are also to blame. If that were the case, then how come these types of crimes aren’t at an all time high? Most of the time, it never has to do with video games. There are a number of factors that more evidence on what caused them to do said crime. According to a website on [Forbes.com](https://www.google.com/amp/s/www.forbes.com/sites/olliebarder/2019/02/15/new-study-shows-that-there-is-no-link-between-violent-video-games-and-aggression-in-teenagers/amp/), a case was done back in February of 2019 where they tested a number of adults and teenagers (about 2,008) and gave them certain games to play and tested to see how they would react. In about everyone that was tested, nobody showed any kind of aggressive behavior when playing a violent game. This case was said more on the [Royal Society Publishing](https://royalsocietypublishing.org/doi/10.1098/rsos.171474) website. There was just no link with violent video games and aggression, thus showing there is no link that video games cause gun related or murder related crimes. It just isn’t linked at all. Donald Trump keeps saying that video games causes real life violence. As said on [CNBC](https://www.google.com/amp/s/www.cnbc.com/amp/2018/03/09/trump-unlikely-to-change-policy-on-violent-video-games.html), back in 2018 after the Florida high school shooting, Trump says that video games are to blame as to what had happened. However, numerous people came out saying that video games should not be the only reason as there are a number of other reasons. Such as mental problems, bullying, abuse, etc. Even with all these case studies, a link can not be found with video games and real life violence. It is always something else.

This is to reach out to those who mainly play video games, whether it be for a living, for work or just for a hobby to do in your spare time. Even then, certain video games have been banned in a number of countries for different reasons. A major one is Manhunt 2, as said on [Wikipedia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_banned_video_games) for banned games, for having huge amounts of gore, blood, violence and how revolting it was. It was not banned however for anything related to gun violence, as this was banned way before the rise started. In this case, games are not banned for those reasons, and only for what is shown in the game. From what I see, there are no groups that want to ban certain games, as the government of that country already does that beforehand. However, so many people keep saying that video games are not to blame. Adults, teens and even some news outlets, like [The New York Times](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/05/sports/trump-violent-video-games-studies.html) are saying that video games are not why shootings happen. It should be the politicians job to fix what is going on, not us. Not things that have no link whatsoever and to stop ignoring those who are being bullied, abused and having mental problems all together, thinking it's just a phase or they are lying. There are no lies there as everything that has happened is caused by someone being ill, and not getting the help for it. Video games are not to blame for everything just because they don't like it. It was always the case when something new comes out that the newer generation uses. There is so much proof that crime does not come from video games, and if a game is deemed to gory for the public, it either never gets released, it is heavily modified or just flat out banned. Mental health, abuse and bullying are always options and people are getting tired of just 1 thing being ruled out instead of what else could have been the cause. Video games do not cause violence, they never had and even if something like that occurred, it was dealt with in a timely manner as those kind of people never get far. Video games are not to blame, people who cause these crimes are, they do not flue anything or anyone as it releases stress. Stop blaming video games, they are not the problem.

My Own Takes

 There are a number of things that caused me to improve as a writer, and as well as improving the way I tend to write some stuff. I would like to start off with one of my first complete projects that I completed in Playwriting. It was called “Points of Friendship”. I still have the original document still in my Google Drive folder and the last time I edited it was around 3 years ago. The main plot of the play if I recall correctly, is that 2 boys that were once friends had an argument with each other and decided both to not bother going to the prom as best buddies as they had originally planned it months before hand. After the big argument their friends try their best to bring them back together before the prom, which isn’t too hard since it was 6 months away. I did make this play under a short time-frame, but it did open my eyes out more towards what you can do with writing, Sure, the prompt was limited as I can only write in ways that show what characters are going to say or do, but it still helped with me writing them either way, along with how to start off with them, as the main starting point with playwriting is what to write about. This also helped me later in the class I had the class again for another year, and used what I had learned to continue making these plays. The main thing that I learned is that writing within 30 minute increments. If I start writing something randomly and build onto it, I can be built into something bigger, just like with this prompt. Even if now I don’t really write any sort of playwriting at this point, I’ll still remember the times of my starting out fresh with that class, along with the plays that I started. It was just a blank slate, and now it has pages filled with story that I came up with myself. No help from anyone. Only from my teacher and knowing what to write next. I had some good times in that class, great teacher, students who were even really good actors. I do take some notes that I learned from that class into my own writing. It really does help me in the long run.

My Own Take 2

Again, I would have to go back to one of my playwriting plays that I had done 2-3 years ago. This next one however, really shifted how I would write essays. In this case, it would make it easier to make a first draft and then easily polish it for a final draft or revision. I sadly however do now remember what the play was called as it was on my school account and I cannot recall the information to get into it. I do recall what it is about. It’s about a boy whose dad is a famous race car driver and was planning on retiring today at a big car competition. This would be the first time in years that he would be able to be with his dad full time ever since his career took off. At one point I was going to include a mother in the play as it was in my first draft, but later I removed her completely as I felt like it wouldn’t fit with the story and she was scrapped in the final draft. Sadly, that is all I can recall from the play besides that the dad was actually not a famous car driver, but instead a really good stunts person for the car driver and was just really good at his job making it look so real. In the end, both of them make up and decide to go home as his dad starts his life as a retired man. This play was a main example of me faking a first draft. The first draft that I had at the time (which the max was only 10 pages), it was really polished as I could make it before submitting it and working on the final part of the play. I found it really good before I kept working on it, and before I submitted my final draft, I made it as clean as I could, even going so far as to removing certain lines and replacing them with stuff that fit more into the story. This was one main example of me being able to fix a first draft well before it was even due since there was a certain threshold to know about beforehand. This did help me learn more about how first drafts should be made into final drafts and helps me alot now in a number of ways and for future use.

My Letter

Dear Professor Jewell,

 During the time I have spent in class, from late August to about now (which is Monday), a number of things have been done between that time. First, I would like to admit that at first, I wasn’t sure why I even had this class within my major, but I guess it's a good thing so I don’t forget basic ways to start of essays and such. I still recall going into your class for the first time and was already seen with new faces. Still though, I don’t even know all of their names, only some since after a while some students just stopped coming altogether. I was expecting this class to be pretty hard as I had always seen english classes in video and movies being like the second coming of hell with these long essays and book reports. However, this class was actually really chill and calm, if you did all the stuff on time and know what to read beforehand. I did get the packet late as I didn’t have money to buy it but I was able to get it in time for the 2nd reading we did in September. Doing the work wasn’t too bad either as technology and the internet has improved to make things easier for me to research and write my essays. Even though my writings were not the best, I still did what I was able to do with me being a heavy procrastinator. I ended getting things done, but I know I can improve on a lot of things. Coming October, the first major assignment was due which I wrote about playwriting and trains changing my life in a number of ways. I was really expressive with it as both things helped me get through some points of my life. Trains was my favorite thing for years and playwriting was the first and only new thing that I had never done before that I ended up liking. Although my likeness for both of these things have changed, it will still hold a place somewhere in my heart. Now come November, where things for me really have shifted up. Along with the 2nd huge assignment being due, I had also mid-terms to do as well as homework for other classes like Computer Science, which may be way my writing may have gone down quite a bit. I was working on many things at once and I tend to do worse if I’m not only focused on one single thing. Granted I don’t even know how I can really extend this over 600 words, let alone even reach that benchmark unless I just repeat myself over and over again, which I don’t like doing as it seems like the easy way out. I like doing things right, not the dumb right way. Going into December, I had a number of problems outside of the classroom. One thing, I was recently back from my Aunt’s house upstate and was too tired to even do anything until the next week had arrived, hence why me being out there was very, very small or it may even seem like I didn’t want to do anything. I also had other personal problems that I won’t get into which leads into today. I had the prestention to do today and I will admit, I didn’t really bother doing anything before hand and wrote everything within 10 minutes. I did do research beforehand, but I didn’t bother to write anything down from when I did the last major assignment last week. This class was something very different that what I was originally expecting to have years ago when I thought college would just be hell 2.0. It kinda is, but not as bad as people say it to be, but I guess it just differs from college to college or maybe even how the professor is. Needless to say, this class I did enjoy. I guess I wasn’t as active as I could have been, but I’ve always been a shy person, even now. It’s a very hard shell to get out of. Although now, I have been getting done some stuff on my own without anyone there to help me. Hopefully next time, I can engage more into stuff as I am a bit more used to the college environment. Thanks for a great semester.

Sincerely,

Justin Ynfante