

Angry Video Game Nerd Adventures

The Angry Video Game Nerd Adventures, also known as Angry Video Games Nerd Adventures, AVGN Adventures, AVGNA, and TAVGNA, is video game developed by studio Freakzone Games and published by Screw Attack Entertainment on September 20, 2013, on Steam after being greenlit. In this game, the player takes control of the Angry Nerd and has to make its way through a “shitty video game” that resembles the feel and the aesthetics of the '80s and 90's video games while trying to save his friends. The title tries to emulate the difficulty of the old school video games, and at the same time, the title is purposely designed to be the most frustrating and unfair game in gaming history. It was also the last game to be reviewed by the Angry Video Game Nerd on his YouTube channel. A sequel was announced at San Diego ComicCon, with plans to release the game on Steam and Nintendo consoles. The sequel, The Angry Video Game Nerd Adventures 2: ASSimilation, was released in Spring 2016.

Parodying the infamous Cheetahmen opening, the game starts in a slide-show style cutscene of the Nerd and his friends playing an unidentified game. Suddenly, his friends are sucked into the television as the Nerd successfully escapes the vortex by retreating into the basement. However, a hand reaches out of the basement's TV and yanks the Nerd, via his testicles, into Game Land, an amalgamation of all of the shitty, frustrating games the Nerd has played over the decade. Formally guided by Naggi, the patronizing firefly (a parody of The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time's Navi) the Nerd must traverse the unfair plains of Game Land and find his friends and his way out.

This game is one of the games that was released during the Indie Video Game Boom that took the industry at the beginning of the 2010s and is one of the only games that is based on real-life characters, in this case, a YouTube gaming celebrity, that did take off and became a hit in the Indie gaming community and Steam.

“Every game has its thing, and this game's thing IS TO PISS ME OFF!”

-The Angry Video Game Nerd-



The Angry Nerd

Just as it was said before, TAVGNA is a game that is based on a real YouTube known as The Angry Video Game Nerd, but who is it? Well, is an American comedy retrogaming web series, created by and starring James Rolfe. The series centers on Rolfe's character "The Nerd", a short-tempered and foul-mouthed video game fanatic who comment on retro games he considers to be of poor quality. While the series began with Rolfe simply playing games while delivering a running commentary, the show eventually grew in scope to encompass sketches featuring guest characters, reviews of gaming consoles and peripherals, and short lectures about video game history and culture.

Starting as an independent filmmaker, Rolfe intended for his earliest videos of the Nerd character to be a joke privately shown to his friends, but in 2004, with collaboration from his friend Mike Matei, Rolfe put the Angry Nintendo Nerd videos on his website, Cinemassacre.com. Later in 2006, Matei persuaded Rolfe to put his work on YouTube, where it gained in popularity and 2007, the series became a program on ScrewAttack and GameTrailers, where it was renamed The Angry Video Game Nerd to avoid trademark issues with Nintendo and to allow Rolfe to review games from non-Nintendo consoles. From there on, the series became a cult success, and Rolfe began appearing as the character in various other media such as a feature-length film and video games, and many public appearances.

The Angry Video Game Nerd is considered one of the pioneers of internet review videos, being highly influential on the style and format of subsequent video reviewers as well as being responsible for helping to bring the concept into the mainstream.

What This Shitty Game Offers

The game takes several inspirations of gameplay styles and aesthetics from classic titles such as Megaman and Castlevania. Having an uncountable amount of obstacles (such as flying fireballs, constantly appearing spikes, and the always tedious death blocks) as well as hard-to-kill enemies. Additionally, there are several references to past AVGN episodes and these range from quotes, enemies, hazards, and power-ups. For example, the power-up we find in the game is a direct reference to Friday the 13th, the Glitch Gremlin that leaves a trail of enemy freezing glitches si another reference to the show, and Super Mecha Death Christ, a power-up that destroys and kills all opponents on screen. Beer bottles are also points of health and tiny AVGN faces serve as extra lives, while Nintoasters serve as checkpoints.

Some of the characters that we can find during the game are: The Nerd, The Guitar Guy (Kyle Justin), Mike, The Bullshit Man, Brent Floss, Andre the Black Nerd, Wiz and Boomstick, Keith Apiary, Jirad the Completionist (from The Completionist), Pat the NES Punk, Egorapto (Newground Animator), Angry Joe (YouTube video game Celebrity), Craig and Chad, Mathew Lentz, Mr. Destructiod and Jim Sterling (another big YouTube video game celebrity).

Difficulty Level Chart

Difficulty	Easy	Normal	Old School	Hard as Balls	Fucking Impossible	Y.O.L.O.
Health	6	3	3	2	1	1
Lives	Infinite	30	15	5	5 (no extras)	1 (no extras)
Continues	infinite lives	infinite lives	5	3	No Continues	No Continues
Checkpoints	Visible	Visible	Invisible	Invisible	None	None
Saving	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
Enemies	Weak	Normal	Normal	Strong	Strong	Strong
Weapons	Strong	Normal	Normal	Weak	Weak	Weak
Gun Color	Pink	Orange	Grey	Black	Gold	Rainbow
Unlocked	Start	Start	Start	Beat "Old School"	Beat "Hard as Balls"	Beat "Fucking Impossible"

The Music, the Freaking Music

TAVGNA OST consist of 19 pieces, all of which were composed by Sam Beddoes. This 19 songs range all the way from the music used in the different levels of the games, to the Tittle song, the victory or Clear Level piece and the cut scene music, just to mention some. The total play time of the OST album is about 30 to 35 minutes and most of the pieces tend to be not longer than 2 minutes.

Sam Beddoes, as said before, is the composer of the whole OST and according to his LinkedIn profile, he is a software designer & developer for FreakZone Games. He is also responsible for the graphics and art in some video game projects and some of his works include AWESOME Land (iOS, Android, Kindle Fire), MANOS: The Hands of Fate (iOS, Android, Windows PC) and Angry Video Game Nerd Adventures I and II (Windows PC, console version pending release).

For the music of TAVGNA, he decided to emulate the chip-tune music style that is so characteristic of the video games that were used as a reference for the game, and this helped give the OST that old school feels that music from games developed in the '80s and '90s had. This sound is something that is emulated using a different plugin that recreates the chip-tune music. Even though some may think that the compositions were done using chip-tunes and old-style music composition techniques as were known and done in the above mention decades, the fact that the game is a digital product and that PC's and consoles nowadays do not relay and/or use music chips like the ones used earlier in the industry in consoles such as the NES, SNES, Atari 2600, etc, give us a clues of the used of plugins and chip-tune emulators. The used of plugins and chip-tune software emulators is something that is also found in different video games such as Undertale, Broforce, Enter the Gungeon and many other Indie video games.

Looking deep into the music of this game, we can see that not only is the audio of this OST a celebration to the sound of the old video game days, but also the compositions and the way they are arranged to play during the gameplay are reminisces of the way music was arrange and composed during those early days. All of the musical pieces in this particular game are arrange and composed in a way that they can be looped infinitely until the player either dies, pauses, or enters the Boss fight state. Is very interesting to see that even though the music tends to repeat a lot is so well composed that it does not become tedious to hear over and over because they were composed taking into account that the games, as mention before, is hard and tedious, so the music tends to have a protagonist that does not compete with the other aspects of the game, but instead tends to reinforce and highlight the idea of you playing an old difficult game, its function is to help enhance the games visual and mechanical style rather than become a memorable OST by its own.

As mention before, the OST is pretty short and even though each level has its music, they all share the same musical piece when encountering a Boss fight, and that is something very remanent of old school video games, as well as the music that plays during the level selection and the pause menu. Each music, of each level, is not only original composition but at the same time, they were composed in a way that when you hear them you can almost understand which games were the main influence behind each musical piece. For example, even though we can see and hear a parallel between Castlevania and Assholevania in their titles and their graphic appearance, if you listen carefully you can identify that both Castlevania and Assholevania share a similar feel in their music, just as Metroid and Future 2010 (even though the music of Future 2010 also resembles in a way the music used in the original 1994 DOOM).

Is That All? (Conclusion)

Even when there is not much to say about this OST because of its length and its music as a whole, is fun to hear and understand the way the music was composed, arrange and played. Is also fascinating to hear each piece and try to understand were the inspiration for each one came from, and realize that the whole OST was created in a similar way each level was designed, with different influence of a variety of games that are not only considered classic game, but that may have also meant a lot to the people that designed the game as well as to Beddoes, the composer of this magnificent music. This OST may not have won any prizes or acknowledgments, but is very good and more than a decent starting point for any composer who is in charge of composing music that needs to resemble the old school video games music, either in their sound, playback techniques and/or compositional methods. Sam Beddoes really did a good job at recreating what the games ask to be recreated for itself and at the end even when the music may not be as memorable as Cuphead's or Undertale's, is a very decent OST that everyone should listen to at least once if they want to understand how chip-tune music works, and how it differentiates from other types of music used in recent games, as well as to have a good insight into how this music is created from a more modern and contemporary approach.

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