Crash-N-Comedy: Slapstick Comedy in *Crash Bandicoot N.Sane Trilogy* and *Crash Tag Team Racing*

Haryo Pambuko Jiwandono
Brawijaya University
Jalan Veteran
Malang, East Java
Indonesia
+62-821-366-23-960
hpjiwandono@gmail.com

ABSTRACT
Slapstick comedy is a key part of the *Crash Bandicoot* franchise. This article will explore how slapstick humour is used in the *Crash Bandicoot* franchise to mitigate and ameliorate the sense of failure that players may feel in avatar death. This argument is developed through a discussion of two games within the franchise: *Crash Bandicoot N Sane Trilogy* (Vicarious Visions, 2017) and *Crash Tag Team Racing* (Radical Entertainment, 2005). The discussion of failure in these two games builds on Juul's (2013) prior work on failure in games, to illustrate the role that humour can play in maintaining players' interest in cyclical gameplay that is designed to be played in ways which include repetition and failure.

Keywords
Crash Bandicoot, slapstick comedy, failure, repetition

INTRODUCTION
Death is a key part of the *Crash Bandicoot* franchise. This article will explore how slapstick humour is used in the *Crash Bandicoot* franchise to mitigate and amelioratethe sense of failure that players may feel in avatar death. This argument is developed through a discussion of two games within the franchise: *Crash Bandicoot N Sane Trilog*y (Vicarious Visions, 2017) and *Crash Tag Team Racing* (Radical Entertainment, 2005). The discussion of failure in these two games builds on Juul's (2013) prior work on failure in games, to illustrate the role that slapstick humour can play in maintaining players interest in cyclical gameplay that is designed to be played in ways which include repetition and failure. The slapstick death sequences found in the *Crash Bandicoot* series act to mitigate frustration at avatar death (and other forms of in game failure), while slapstick humour is also used to maintain the players engagement with Crash during sections of the game where they have no effective control over the avatar. Furthermore, the humorous death animations in the games have become a celebrated feature of the series. This element is emphasized by the inclusion of death animations as unlockable videos and achievements within the game, as found in *Crash Tag Team Racing*'s Die-o-rama videos; and carefully highlighted as a core mechanic of the remade Crash Bandicoot N. Sane Trilogy.

CRASH COURSE OF *CRASH BANDICOOT*'S COMEDIC CONTEXT

The *Crash Bandicoot series* was launched in 1996, and the franchise had produced 21 games by 2020. The franchise was originally a PlayStation exclusive, but subsequent games have been released for most major consoles, as well as in mobile formats, and on outlier consoles like the Zeebo and N-GAGE. The games centre on the now iconic titular character Crash Bandicoot, a mutant marsupial, alongside a cast of friends and foes who all become playable at several points of the series. Most of the *Crash Bandicoot* games are platformers, but several are go-kart racing games, including *Crash Tag Team Racing*. The franchise has sold over 50 million units worldwide; more than 10 million of these sales were from Crash Bandicoot N. Sane Trilogy, an HD remaster of the first three games in the franchise: *Crash Bandicoot* (Naughty Dog 1996), *Crash Bandicoot 2: Cortex Strikes Back* (Naughty Dog, 1997), and Crash Bandicoot: Warped (Naughty Dog, 1998). The Trilogy is described on the PlayStation blog as a 'remaster plus' because of the extensive redesign and addition of new content by Vicarious Visions to the original Naughty Dog productions (Tanguay, 2016) which brings stronger visual fidelity to the game's slapstick comedy and applies most of the slapstick devices to Coco Bandicoot; Crash's sisters who was not playable in the original Naughty Dog trilogy.

This article attempts to explore distinctive slapstick humour expressions in the series through analysis of *Crash Bandicoot N. Sane Trilogy* and *Crash Tag Team Racing* as dichotomic cases of slapstick games. Both games contrast in expressing how avatar- death is handled humorously in the franchise. Crash Bandicoot N. Sane Trilogy, reintroduces the series' humorous deaths feature which is often instantiated through failure in overcoming difficult obstacles. The feature itself is also tied to the cycle of repetition and failure that was a common ludic and cultural feature in the platformer genre, while *Crash Tag Team Racing* demonstrates how spectacular failure became a rewarding feature of *Crash Bandicoot* series through the introduction of unlockable content that depicted humorous avatar death. The game had thirty-four audio-visual "Die-O-Rama" sequences, which were unlocked when Crash died in specific ways such as opening an ice gorilla's cage, or falling into a cauldron.

A closer inspection of *Crash Bandicoot* series exhibits that it is firmly rooted in slapstick comedy. Slapstick comedy is a spectacle that celebrates humiliation and physical comic (Peacock, 2014). The overall ludic presentation of the *Crash Bandicoot* series simulates abovementioned premises of slapstick comedy extensively. The original trilogy games are known for their demands for precision and one hitbox for the character. Combining those elements with often complex level designs, players are expected to simulate slapstick comic as they fail to meet the objective of the game. Yet Crash Bandicoot's comic pain is not portrayed in a malicious manner compared to other high difficulty digital games such as *Dark Souls* series. Although *Crash Bandicoot*'s slapstick death is simulated as a failure, it is expressed as a comic element of the game. Like in slapstick comedy performance, the suffering of an avatar who experiences comic pain is lessened by its comedic presentation (Peacock, 2014).

It can be argued that *Crash Bandicoot* series do not only express slapstick comedy, but embodies it. The series presents slapstick comedy as an integral part of it. Despite frequent depictions of in-game death, they have never been permanent thus far as players can still complete all games in the series regardless of their death counts without ludic negative consequences. Compare it to *Sekiro Shadow Dies Twice* of which continuous deaths will make the game more difficult by disabling side quests and XP gain. Crash Bandicoot series present slapstick deaths as comedic intermissions while players adjust themselves to the learning curves. Like in slapstick comedy, deaths and other forms of physical incapacitation is expressed more as comic presence as opposed to consequential failure. The slapstick comedy is a presentation which negotiates failure and turns the inability of overcoming obstacles into comedy as opposed to tragedy.

The purpose of this paper is, therefore, to study the diversity of slapstick comedy embodiments in digital games using *Crash Bandicoot N. Sane Trilogy* and *Crash Tag Team Racing* as examples due to their distinctive expressions of slapsitck comedy. *Crash Bandicoot N. Sane Trilogy* closely follows the series' tradition which associates slapstick comedy with non-malicious failures, while Crash Tag Team Racing portrays slapstick comedy as a reward; both emphasize on comic violence as key signifiers. As, previous studies of comedy in digital games also heavily focus on its association with failure. This chapter aims to enrich knowledge of slapstick comedy by analyzing its association with both ameliorated failure and success, and how *Crash Bandicoot* series built its unique convention of slapstick comedy.

SLAPSTICK AND THE BANDICOOT

Slapstick comedy itself is a form of comedy that focuses on ridiculous violence and demeaning others for self-satisfaction (Gunning, 2010; Peacock, 2014). In the beginning, slapstick comedy was developed in several popular performance tradition such as Commedia dell'arte, pantomime, and circus; until finally it was adopted into new media such as television comedy shows, comedy films, and video games (Hartmann & Vorderer, 2010; Peacock, 2014). Virtual violence as a key concept of slapstick comedy in video games is a form of player behavior that results in hurting video game characters (Hartmann & Vorderer, 2010). To connect it with slapstick comedy in Crash Bandicoot games, three central theories that encapsulate the notion of slapstick humor need to be discussed that can be implemented in video games. Superiority theory and incongruity theories provide the conceptual foundation of humor (Billig, 2005).

Superiority is in effect in video games when a particular character is subjected to simulated violence to trigger shame (Morreall, 2009). Superiority theory also explains one reason we may laugh, as it is caused by audiences' superior feeling when seeing comic pain being inflicted on performers and/or visual characters. The comic pain will take effect when audiences witness the action and ridicule its sufferers within normative limits (Peacock, 2014). The superiority theory can also be connected with dehumanization of comedic object which would numb audiences' pities upon said objects (Bergson 1913). Additionally, Bergson (1913) argues that emotional detachment is a vital formative element of comedy. Comic suffering must not be presented as emotionally hurtful occurrences by, for example, describing the toll it takes on the object. Objectifying recipients of slapstick violences

separates comedy with tragedy which portrays emotional stresses as consequences of said violence by sufferers (Bergson, 1913). Therefore, superior theory separates comic objects from its individuality and subjectivity in order to block audiences' compassion toward comic objects, and render violence as something funny (Bergson, 1913; Morreall, 2009; Peacock, 2014).

The incongruity theory explains that audiences expect particular outcomes to befall the character that are both humorous and unexpected (Peacock, 2014). Incongruity theories explain that comedy is a break in routine that is appropriate to the setting and cultural sensibilities of the presentation (Peacock, 2014; McGowan, 2017). It explains that audiences expect unexpected comic acts to happen toward the character(s) during performance(s). There is a catch, however, incongruity theory refers to cultural familiarity toward comic dissonance between comedy's signifier actions and its signified meaning (Billig, 2005). It means, the incongruity of slapstick comic frames is contingent to the cultural familiarity of its performance frame. Should slapstick comedy's comic frame be not well familiarized with the cultural setting of its performance frame, the audience might decode that as a non-comedic action which would not provoke laughter.

Slapstick comedy is strongly associated with early American cinema (Stott 2005) and American animations like Tom and Jerry and The Simpsons (Peacock 2014). It has been incorporated into the visual styles of numerous forms of media and entertainment, from cinema, circus, puppetry, television, and theater (Peacock, 2014), to video games (Hartmann & Vorderer, 2010). Peacock (2014) lists elements commonly found in slapstick, of which several are relevant to the Crash Bandicoot series;

- "comic pain and comic violence," which is found in both games;

- "falling and tripping," which are common ways to die in both games;

- "malicious props," such as the dynamite boxes found in both games; and

- "stunts and acrobatics," in these games the slapstick usually eventuates as a result of a failed stunt or acrobatic maneuver.

She adds that slapstick creates absurd situations, which may be physically impossible, challenge common sense, and transgress what is considered acceptable behaviour (Peacock 2014). Slapstick humor often involves the deliberate humiliation of others (Gunning 2010) - in particular, the deliberate upsetting of dignity associated with working class culture (Peacock 2014). The *Crash Bandicoot* series actively capitalizes on spectacular failure by designing multiple specific humorous death and failure animation sequences, and in some cases connecting the death sequences to metagame elements by making them unlockable collectables or achievements. Humorous death and failure are active features of *Crash Bandicoot* games (Juul 2013), which suggests that there is deliberate designing of slapstick comedy elements in the series. The implication

is, *Crash Bandicoot N. Sane Trilogy* and *Crash Tag Team Racing* offer a novel approach in understanding the scope of humor in digital games.

The premises of this chapter argues that the slapstick humor that frames the depiction of avatar death has an important role in ameliorating the sense of failure that may be felt by the player when their avatar dies or is otherwise unable to continue in the game. Jesper Juul's (2013) previous work has emphasized the role of tragedy in engaging players through the cycle of failure and repetition that characterizes the process of playing many digital games. The *Crash Bandicoot* series aptly illustrates the complementary role that comedy can take in negotiating that cycle. Both *Crash Bandicoot N. Sane Trilogy* and *Crash Tag Team Racing* make use of what Juul terms as 'spectacular' failure (2013), which he describes as a 'strateg[y] through which we can make failure feel less negative by actively seeking it out' (2013).

SLAPSTICK COMEDY IN *CRASH BANDICOOT N. SANE TRILOGY*

In the opening sequence of the *Crash Bandicoot N Sane Trilogy*, the camera pans away from the logo of the developer of the remake, revealing that Vicarious Visions is stamped onto the side of a rather ominous looking device, with a chute at the top, marked as hazardous with black and yellow stripes and a short conveyor belt. Behind the device are erratically stacked classic crates, both standard and green nitro; to the side is a single jump crate, marked with a yellow arrow. Crash inserts himself into the frame, immediately distinctive because of his blocky, distinctly 128-bit aesthetic, recalling his origins on the Sony *PlayStation*. He darts off screen, returning with an armload of Wumpa Fruit. Unable to see past the fruit he trips over the jump crate, throwing the Wumpa Fruit into the air, where they fall into the chute on the top of the device; two precariously stacked crates also fall, following the fruit into the chute. There is an exaggerated crunching sound, and a small cloud of coloured fragments billows out of the chute. Then, with a series of boinging sounds, the device fires out the crates and Wumpa Fruit with a new, clearly more graphically sophisticated look. Crash raises his face from the floor to watch this process in wonder, and turns towards the camera and raises his eyebrows knowingly. He leaps onto the jump crate and uses it to propel himself into the chute, the device emits the same sound and smoke, then he reappears, rolling along the conveyor belt in a reclining position, revealing his new 'smoother' next-generation appearance.

This audiovisual sequence is not just about the aesthetic re-skinning of the game - it also signals how avatar death will continue to be handled in the remastered games. Death will be fun. It might be an inconvenience, but it is also a chance to rest, as suggested by the reclining figure of Crash rolling along the conveyor belt. Most of all, death is part of the game that will happen repeatedly, as suggested by the factory-like scene where the opening sequence takes place. The sequence serves this dual role because of the need to convey that the aesthetic redevelopment of the game has not removed or adjusted the core mechanic of failure and repetition which followers of the series associate with the games. Annoying as it might be, slapstick deaths in *Crash Bandicoot N. Sane*

Trilogy provide players opportunities to pay attention to its learning curve and execute correct gameplay timing in order to pass the game's obstacles. Reflecting on relief theory (Billig, 2005; Peacock, 2014), the slapstick death sequences in *Crash Bandicoot N. Sane Trilogy* lessen negative emotional impacts of failures through maintenance of good-humored moods even as players lose lives and are under threat of game over.

In *Crash Bandicoot N. Sane Trilogy*, Crash explores the pitfall-ridden N Sanity Island in order to find and defeat the villainous Dr Cortex, and halt his warped experiments on animals. The island is divided into a sequence of levels, which are negotiated through jumping and spinning and introduce the iconic game objects which are central to the game (and series) mechanics: crates. Standard crates may contain Aku Aku masks or Wumpa Fruits, but crates are also used as save points, to jump onto and reach high places, and as explosives. Smashing the crates to release the Wumpa Fruit or Aku Aku masks is crucial for success, as Crash gets an extra life each time 100 Wumpa Fruit are collected, and each Aku Aku mask protects him from one 'hit.' Clearing each level thus involves a lot of crate smashing, which is interspaced among defeating opponents, and avoiding traps and pitfalls. Negotiating all this activity is quite intense for the player as well as for Crash, who signals his relief at the end of the level with a sigh, accompanied by wiping his forehead with the back of his hand and forearm.

At this point the game cuts away from the colourful N Sanity Island and Crash now stands in a darkened room under a spotlight, while the player's performance on the level is analysed. The game calculates the number of crates that were not smashed during the level. While the number of crates is shown increasing on the screen, the crates that were missed drop down on Crash's head. As more boxes are dropped, he becomes more and more beaten down: first to his knees, then his hands and knees, and finally—in the worst case—lying prone on the ground. If a large number of crates have been missed, when he stands he is still unsteady and reeling from the blows in a manner which recalls the slapstick of silent films and classic cartoons. The first time this happens, an achievement 'The Box That Broke the Bandicoot's Back' is also unlocked.

Even so, Crash quickly recovers from this abuse, standing up he looks up at the player and then around before shaking his head violently as if to refocus. Here the slapstick humour inflicts the consequences of the failure on Crash, effectively punishing him for the player's shortcomings. Through this slapstick depiction of pain the 'unreal' aspect of the consequences of videogames is highlighted, the failure doesn't have an impact on the player, and barely has an impact on Crash, who isn't real anyway. Yet by including this feature in the non-playable between-level audio-visual recap of the score from the prior level, the game makes this moment one which encourages an identification with Crash through a joint humiliation. As if it's not enough just to make it to the end of the level, now Crash is punished for each crate the player missed, and even if all crates were smashed, Crash better not have lost a life while playing through the level.

If so, the game announces 'nearly perfect… …but you died,' and Crash's annoyance is palpable, he crosses his arms, taps his left foot and looks up at the player with his eyes narrowed.

34 WAYS TO DIE IN *CRASH TAG TEAM RACING*

The main comedic device of *Crash Tag Team Racing* is its Die-o-Rama feature. The feature's name is, itself, comedic as it is a pun of the word diorama. In the simplest sense, a pun occurs when a word "can be heard or understood in two different ways" (Cleary, 2006: 4). A more detailed explanation can be found in Delabastita's (1997) argument that punning is a form of wordplay where the textual relevance of a certain word is deliberately made ambiguous through the addition of a new connotation or restructuring homonym. A pun as a comedic device provides a break from routine (McGowan, 2017) through the incongruity of ambiguity between its semantic forms and audiences' expectations (Delabastita, 1997; Veisbergs, 1997) within a cultural context (McGowan, 2017).

The word 'diorama' suggests the replication of real-world phenomena (Gernsheim & Gernsheim, 1968). In Die-o-Rama, players will enact various slapstick scenarios. Unlike other *Crash Bandicoot* games, virtual death in *Crash Tag Team Racing* is not associated with failure and does not result in tangible loss. It is, rather, an exploration of the ludic possibilities of virtual death as a reward. Die-o-Rama is epistemologically similar to a diorama, as they are both concerned with recreating phenomena in certain space(s). Regarding its terminology, Paul (2012) connects the understanding of wordplay with the ludic design of digital games by simulating the pun dimension of wordplay in the cyberspace of *Crash Tag Team Racing* . Die-o-Rama transforms into a comedic unit of *Crash Tag Team Racing* due to the deliberate assignment of ambiguity between its written name and vocal pronunciation (Delabastita, 1997; Cleary, 2006), as well as the incongruent novelty of slapstick comedy which it expresses.

Slapstick comedy is the core of Die-o-Rama, as every scene involves Crash getting physically assaulted by various in-game objects such as non-playable characters, environments and even inanimate objects; often via seemingly mundane interaction. Unlike in *Crash Bandicoot N. Sane Trilogy* where termination of the playable character's (i.e. Crash and Coco) progression occurs immediately after interactions with hazardous objects and is integrated within gameplay, Die-o-Rama provides cinematic presentations in the form of cutscenes which allow Crash's demises to be represented at greater length making for a more detailed narrative with dynamic angles. One example is in a Die-o-Rama entitled Mechanic Monday. The instantiation unit of Mechanic Monday is located on Midway; the hub for *Crash Tag Team Racing*'s game worlds, around locations called Tomb Town and Penny Arcade. Die-o-Rama's instantiation unit is an in-game object in the form of a broken car, supported by a jack that stands out in relation to the theme-appropriate units around it. Mechanic Monday can be instantiated by controlling Crash to spin toward the abovementioned broken car. If the player manages to touch the car, a cutscene depicts Crash being crushed by the falling broken car after he destabilizes the jack. Afterward, the unlocked Die-o-Rama would be added to the players' collection to be accessed at their convenience.

To be fair, we can argue that Mechanic Monday is an obvious comedic device due to the unusual positioning of the car. Others, however, are more mundane - including Heavy Metal and Tough Chicken where players as Crash can instantiate the die-o-rama cutscenes by interacting with an unassuming vending machine and harassing Stew the race announcer. In the former, Crash gets pinned down by the falling vending machine after he banged and climbed it because the machine did not give him the product he wanted. In the latter, Crash is punched down to resemble a pulverized Crash from *Crash Bandicoot 2: Cortex Strikes Back* by Stew before being kicked away. In Explodeded Die-o-Rama, players did not have to input a deliberate command that would initiate the cutscene as it will occur by simply putting Crash characters near an exclamation mark road sign, and an ignited dynamite stick will appear and explode alongside Crash. Other notable gags in Die-o-Rama involve Crash getting devoured by the abominable snowman and sharks.

DISCUSSION

Despite its similarity in aesthetic, *Crash Tag Team Racing*'s slapstick comedy differs from *Crash Bandicoot N. Sane Trilogy* in several respects. Firstly, it features fewer incongruences. Gunning (2010) argues that comedy manipulates occurrences of Kantian nature which champions order and purposiveness by disrupting the normal progress through sudden changes in actions and nuances. While there is separation between gameplay and comedic cutscenes, *Crash Tag Team Racing*'s humor is also a part of its mechanism as it is purposely coded as a part of its formal objectives. Secondly, slapstick comedy in the form of a *Die-O-Rama* is a purposive feature in Crash Tag Team Racing, as opposed to disruption of the game's routine as it is in *Crash Bandicoot N. Sane Trilogy*. Hessler (2019) argues that slapstick comedy is associated with failure. However, Crash Tag Team Racing associates slapstick comedy with formal achievement.

Crash Tag Team Racing celebrates the longstanding tradition of slapstick comedy in the series but instead of punishing players with losing lives or missing opportunities, it rewards them with cutscenes which are accessible anytime once it has been instantiated. *Crash Tag Team Racing* formalizes celebrated slapstick deaths in the series into the game's mechanisms. While it has been positively received by the series' fandom over the course of 25 years, slapstick death is a formal feature of failing to meet objectives of most games in the series. Therefore, while comedic, slapstick death is a feature which players should avoid to achieve higher completion of the game. *Crash Tag Team Racing* changes the series' approach by making instantiation of slapstick death as necessary to unlock Die-O-Rama rewards. It differs from the majority of *Crash Bandicoot* games by providing formal incentives for players who enact slapstick death through ludic interaction in its virtual world.

The use of slapstick humor in the *Crash Bandicoot N. Sane Trilogy* creates an opening which potentially distances players from the immediate physical failure that they have experienced. Emphasizing the peculiar ways that Crash or Coco meets their ends establishes a reflective dimension which focuses on the separation of player and avatar. When the avatar dies, the player shifts to a spectator mode and watches the animated death scene while the game reloads. The consequence of mistiming a crucial action is downplayed, Crash dies but in a way that provides brief entertainment during the waiting time before the player gets start the game again. Crash might not look like

he is having a very good time, but his failure is communicated in a consequence free cartoon logic, signaling that losing a life is supposed to be a small step in the overall experience of achievement that comes with the eventual mastery of the game.

The between level analysis also distances players from the consequences of failure. By dealing out the players' failure to Crash in what is clearly a slapstick manner, they are spared some of the humiliation for their mistiming and missteps. Crash is shown to suffer for the player's shortcomings, but even when he is brutally knocked down, seconds later he is back up again and ready to play. Crash's humorous resilience softens the cyclic and repetitious structure of the game which invariably requires multiple attempts to complete a level, especially to a point where all the crates are smashed. This resilience is ideally reflected in the player, who might not be able to accept the underlying structure of the game as good natured as Crash, but is provided at least with a good humored model of suffering.

The slapstick death sequences found in the *Crash Bandicoot* series act to mitigate frustration at avatar death (and other forms of in game failure), shows how humorous death is tied to the cycle of repetition and failure that was a common gameplay feature in the platformer genre. While slapstick humour is also used to maintain the players' engagement with Crash during sections of the game where they have no effective control over the avatar. *Crash Tag Team Racing* also demonstrates how spectacular failure became a feature of the *Crash Bandi*coot series through the introduction of unlockable content that depicted humorous of avatar death. Furthermore, the humorous death animations in the games have become a celebrated feature of the series. Which is an 'inversion' of slapstick maybe as it is associated with failure.

CRASHED AND CONCLUDED

Pain is a major comedic device in *Crash Bandicoo*t series that categorizes it into slapstick comedy territory (Peacock, 2014). Both *Crash Bandicoot N. Sane Trilogy* and *Crash Tag Team Racing* express three dimensions of slapstick comedy in high degree. They simulate and represent comedic violence in a jovial setting within the conventions of slapstick comedy for players' amusement, and occasionally to compensate for their shortcomings in playing those games. Slapstick comedy in both *Crash Bandicoot* games has the purpose to degrade Crash's status as a protagonist within the corridor of superiority theories of comedy, elevating players over the funny object, that is Crash. They provide various incongruous demise animations that are unpredictable within their settings and that call into play the cultural sensibilities of slapstick comedy. They provide possible catalysts for laughter and catharsis of unpleasantness for players through expressions of slapstick comedy.

There are slight differences, however, in the ludic affordances of slapstick comedy in *Crash Bandicoot N. Sane Trilogy* compared to those of *Crash Tag Team Racing*. In the former, slapstick comedy involving incapacitation or presumed death is expressed as a disruption; associated with failure albeit to a lesser degree compared to their original counterparts of the 90s, due to the addition of Trophy/Achievement features which occasionally compensate players for their slapstick failure. In the latter, slapstick comedy involving incapacitation of players' characters is explicity simulated as a ludic achievement with rewards instead of failures.

These differences open up a new discussion topic: can slapstick comedy in video games be framed as an ergodic goal within video games? A previous study by Hessler (2019) emphasizes the frustration and ridicule that follow upon slapstick comedic failure in video games, while Svelch (2014) and Giappone (2015) focus on phenomenological pleasures and cultural sensibilities of slapstick comedy designs in video games; none deeply discuss slapstick comedy as a ludic formal element in video games. As video games' meaningful interactions revolve on goal attainment (Juul, 2005; Salen & Zimmerman, 2005; Mayra, 2008), it is important for future studies of games and comedy to give closer attention to simulation of slapstick comedy as a feature that is formally and purposively designedin video games

To close this article, I repeat our earlier point; as comedy is a repetition (Peacock, 2014), that *Crash Bandicoot* series is the epitome of slapstick comedy in digital games. Various gags that relies on physical pain and comic suffering of our marsupial friend and his cohorts has become a staple of gaming comedy while paving way for similar expression in the genre to come. As comedy is on the fringe of the scientific community (Peacock, 2014), comedy in digital games is equally marginalized. Let's hope the resurgence of *Crash Bandicoot*'s popularity on the 8th generation digital gaming console and beyond would bring more attention to the academic community. Hopefully, the future will bring us more academic writing on our venerable marsupial…and breaking all the boxes while doing so to not break the bandicoot's back.

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