

# Payne-fully disappointing



THE FINAL SCORE

Dan Hagerman

When you take away certain things in the process of adapting a story to a different medium, you'd better make damn sure that they weren't the things that made that story so special to begin with.

I had been looking forward to the weekend of October 17 with a great deal of anticipation. I'd been waiting for a film adaptation of the game Max Payne almost as soon as it was released back in 2001. When Max Payne the game came out, it was special for its time due to its impressive graphics, neo-noir style, and intentionally funny, hammy dialogue.

Max Payne the film, while showing off some fairly nice visual effects and art direction, fails to measure up not only to the game it's based on, but also as a film in general.

Max Payne lacks the quirky dialogue that its sire held so dear. The original game was a little bit like Juno (except that Juno had substantially less killing and drug abuse); both sometimes came off as trying to be more quirky and clever than they actually were.

The film was more like a very boring version of The Punisher; both of the characters have their families murdered, and they both set out to right the wrongs forced upon them.

The big difference is that for the most part, the Punisher deals with his problems by wanton violence, whereas Mark Wahlberg's Max Payne usually



Mark Wahlberg and Mila Kunis star in Max Payne, the highly anticipated third-person shooter turned film, debuted in theatres on October 17.

deals with his problems by awkwardly glaring at them in slow motion.

Another thing that Max Payne lacks compared to its computer game predecessor is the sense of style. The narrative of the game was set up as a graphic novel, which not only lent itself to some interesting presentation effects, but was also highly unique for the time. The film, on the other, lacks any real sense of stylization except for some gratuitous slow motion, drug hallucinations, and one sequence where the screen flashes red a whole lot of times to indicate physical strikes.

However, just because a film differs from its original source material does not mean that the film itself will be bad. Jurassic Park, for instance, differed greatly from the original novel yet still won many over.

Max Payne, sadly, is not Jurassic Park. Max Payne is more in line with Jurassic Park: The Lost World. Both were loosely based on original source material, and both, aside from special effects are really unremarkable.

People enjoyed the character of Max Payne more in the original computer game because even though he was a stereotypical brooding underdog, he had just enough of a sarcastic sense of humour that he was likeable. The Max Payne in the film is decidedly dull.

So was there really anything good going for this movie?

In addition to the special effects, the implementation of the valkyries in the film is a unique choice that could have been expanded on, but were a good addition nonetheless.

Also, having Chris O'Donnell get

punched in the face repeatedly in any movie is worthy of a few points.

Ultimately, Max Payne fails to really deliver anything other than mediocrity. And it's not really the actors' faults. Mark Wahlberg is more than capable of playing Payne, and even though Mila Kunis seems an odd choice for a deadly assassin, she gives the best job that she can with such a limited script.

Even Nelly Furtado's 30-second role is surprisingly well-done, so it's difficult to complain about any one performance.

Overall, if you're feeling like you really need to see an action movie, it'd be better to rent one than go see Max Payne. Or, even better, buy Max Payne and Max Payne 2 for the PC. Dan Hagerman is Copy Editor of The Brunswickian.

## Hagerman's chillin' horoscopes

### Aries



Temperatures may be dropping this week, dear Aries, so be sure to keep yourself active. Do jumping jacks in class while your professor is explaining a complicated topic. When asked to do a problem in front of the class, do pushups. When asked to hand in an assignment, run away! Your lucky rapper is Coolio.

### Taurus

You may be under a lot of pressure with exams just around the corner, dear Taurus, but remember to stay cool under pressure. As chemistry teaches us, if you get really hot under pressure, you'll explode. Stay cool as a cucumber, or you'll be as hot as a pickle. Your lucky, awful John Travolta movie is Be Cool.



### Gemini



When you are scraping your car this morning, dear Gemini, you will notice that the ice has formed into the shape of your own head. Not only will it look like you, but it will also talk to passersby and give them advice. Take this advice with a grain of salt, though, as it's only an ice formation. Your lucky family movie is Ice Age.

### Cancer

Be prepared for increasingly chilly weather over the next few weeks, dear Cancer. Make sure to wrap yourself in multiple layers, such as bubble wrap and aluminum foil. This will not only help to protect you against the upcoming cold, but also will make you shiny and poppy. Your lucky Vanilla Ice song is Ice, Ice Baby.



### Leo



A hot, steaming cup of hot chocolate will hit the spot this week, dear Leo. The spot, unfortunately, will be a spot on the floor after you drop the hot chocolate for it just being too darn hot. You have two options: go buy a new one or try to lap up the remains. You know what to do. Your lucky alternative rock band is Coldplay.

### Virgo

Be sure to wear a thicker coat when going outside, dear Virgo. Not only will this keep you warmer, but it will also mask your body type from casual onlookers. People will constantly be guessing as to just who that person is under the coat. Don't answer, it just adds to your mystique. Your lucky Batman villain is Mr. Freeze.



### Libra



Your shivering will have an unexpected side effect this week, dear Libra. You will shiver at just the right frequency so as to phase through any walls or other barriers that you come across. You can use this power for good, evil, or to just to save time running through the mall. Your lucky Tim Hortons drink is the Iced Capp.

### Scorpio

Bringing a blanket to school with bring unexpected benefits to you this week, dear Scorpio. Not only will it keep you warm, but with a little creature tailoring, it can be made into a poncho. You will be mistaken for Clint Eastwood in A Fistful of Dollars. Happiness and scowls will ensue. Your lucky ice cream flavour is all of them.



### Sagittarius



Turning on the heat in your apartment will have an unexpected side effect this week, dear Sagittarius. Instead of smelling like burned dust, your apartment will instead smell like grape Kool-Aid and marshmallows. It's probably best not to ask why this is so. Your lucky Canadian animated series is Chilly Beach.

### Capricorn

You will see penguins sliding down the street this week, dear Capricorn. You should slide down after them, all the while being mindful of the dangers of Fredericton polar bears. If you haven't seen the polar bears yet, you're just not looking hard enough. Your lucky Gwen Stefani song is Cool.

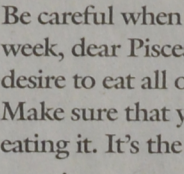


### Aquarius

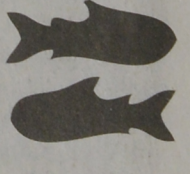


Your impression of the Fonz will be taken too far this week, dear Aquarius. While many may think that you're hip and cool, others will begin to distrust you and try to assassinate you. Be sure to hide in a safe location so as not to be put "on ice." Your lucky temperatures are below zero degrees celsius.

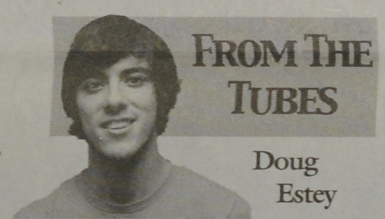
### Pisces



Be careful when storing meat in a meat locker this week, dear Pisces. You may be overwhelmed with the desire to eat all of the frozen meat, but do not succumb. Make sure that you properly thaw your meat before eating it. It's the smart thing to do. Your lucky frozen meat is tuna.



## Peer-to-peer nightmares



FROM THE TUBES

Doug Estey

It all started with a dorm-room project by Northeastern University student Shawn Fanning. In 1998, he programmed a piece of software that would change the Internet world forever. Napster was born, and the music industry as we know it evolved overnight.

Peer-to-peer file sharing has been subject to controversy from day one. It's pretty obvious as to why executives from major record labels get a feeling of uneasiness when they're made aware of the millions of people downloading music across the globe. On the other side of things, the human nature of sharing is equally plausible.

As the Canadian Recording Industry Association (CRIA) sits idly by, perhaps the most alarming series of unfortunate events resulting from the creation of the first peer-to-peer network is what's been happening directly next door with our neighbours in the United

States.

If you're familiar with the Internet (the World Wide Web, the tubes, or what have you) then you know about its tendency to spread news very quickly.

Just as nine and ten-year-old versions of ourselves were learning how to download music, the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) was discovering that people were sharing it among themselves. This caused them to panic, because, you know, people never used to share music with each other before that.

So in light of their most upsetting situation, the RIAA (primarily comprised of EMI, Sony BMG and Universal) turned to Internet Service Providers (ISPs) and the newly-instated Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA) and began suing music-sharing individuals one by one in the United States.

Imagine receiving a letter from the RIAA offering some kind of settlement. In exchange for deleting all of your shared music, promising to never upload it again, and paying them a small fee of up to several thousand dollars (depending on how much they've caught you sharing), they offer to stay out of your hair. It's convenient and it's something that works for everybody, right?

Okay, not so much. But if playing

with the suits sounds like a fun alternative, then you can engage in a not-so-friendly game of cat and mouse with the RIAA and end up in court like the 20,000 other individuals they've brought to the table for sharing MP3s. How does that sound?

These are real-life situations that everyday music enthusiasts like you and I are experiencing in the United States.

In its defence, the recording industry claims that it has sustained losses of up to \$4.2 billion worldwide purely because of peer-to-peer file sharing distribution. The RIAA has had a difficult struggle with public relations as the "bad guy" in this war, however: its standard rate in court for statutory damages is around \$750 per MP3 (roughly 1071 times the actual cost of a song).

It doesn't get much better from there. The RIAA has a known history for actively pursuing their cause without any regard to how silly or incompetent it renders their appearance. In part due to misinformation regarding IP addresses, the association has attempted to sue a computer-incumbent sculptor, a deceased grandmother who was allegedly sharing rap and rock music, a woman who had never purchased or even used a computer, and a

handful of 12 and 13-year-old children.

In a recent campaign against music-hungry university students, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's campus newspaper reported that the RIAA has been known to suggest that students drop out of school or attend community college in order to afford the lawsuits.

Let's just say that this organization doesn't discriminate — much.

All of this is going on while several studies, including one by Industry Canada, have suggested that the downloading and peer-to-peer sharing of MP3s have an unmeasurably small impact on record sales. In the meantime, the RIAA continue to ramp up their alleged costs and, subsequently, prices on copyrighted music.

It's a vicious war between an industry and the very customers that keep it alive. Is the RIAA justified by their cause? Have they gone too far, or have they accomplished anything at all?

The majority of cases to date are still pending and no major progress has been made for either side. For now, we'll have to wait and find out.

Doug Estey is Arts Editor of The Brunswickian.

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