

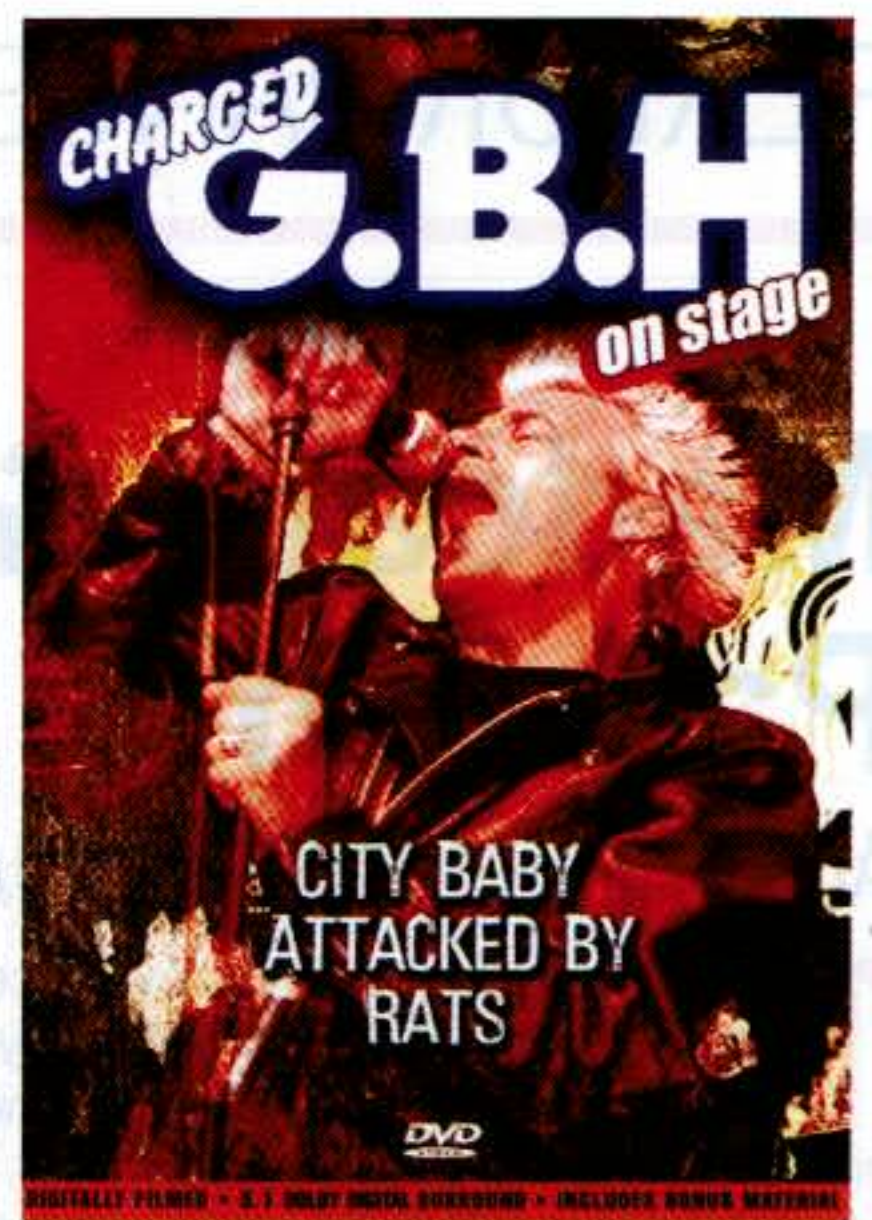
Content

Music DVD

GBH On Stage > City Baby Attacked by Rats

In 1985, at the Catty Shack (or whatever it was called then) I saw these British punk legends live. All week I'd been grinding their albums, *City Baby Attacked by Rats* and *City Baby's Revenge*, into dust to sprinkle onto my Captain Crunch each morning. By the time the show came around, my Mohawk was sharp as nails. About a third into their set, I moshed my way up to the stage and took a dive, taking some of the overhead stage lights with me as my combat boots got tangled in the wires. Needless to say, the bouncers weren't kind when they threw my teenage butt through the door. I managed to sneak back in through a back door, shared a beer with a roady and caught the rest of the show.

The DVD essentially captures that kind of spirit, though it was filmed in 2004, and these guys haven't really progressed much since. The band slaughters half the tracks, and singer Colin seems to miss his lines from time to time. The extras are pitiful, though pretty punk rock—some camcorder footage the band shot on the road and an interview in which the band seems to be falling asleep. I can forgive all that though, because that's the way I want to remember GBH. It was worth it just to be able to tell this little story. I'd buy the disc twice. —Grant Clauser



Nintendo DS

Metroid Prime Hunters

Next to the Super Mario Brothers franchise, Metroid could be considered the second most valuable member of the Nintendo game family. Constructing a version for the surprise hit handheld Nintendo DS, the game's developers have created an era of Wi-Fi wars. Because the DS is Wi-Fi compatible, players of *Metroid Prime Hunters* can log onto the network and battle up to three other players from around the globe in a game of rocket tag on par with Halo. If your home network or a hot spot isn't available, you can battle up to three more people who have a DS, but don't have a game card. Those players get a limited version of the game for as long as they're connected to yours.

Metroid Prime Hunters is a dual action game. In addition to multiplayer battles, you can play in Adventure Mode, which pits you as legendary bounty hunter Samus Aran in a galactic battle with six new bounty hunters as you seek to unlock the secrets of the ultimate power in the universe. Every bounty hunter you defeat in Adventure Mode becomes available for you to use in multiplayer mode. Adventure Mode isn't incredibly challenging and seems designed mostly for you to practice before playing in multiplayer mode. When you first log on to a Wi-Fi game, don't be surprised if you get spanked. It can seem as if other players do nothing but play this game all day. The game is compatible with the new DS Rumble Pak.

—Brian Ploskina



Xbox 360 Game

Tomb Raider: Legend

In this installment of the Tomb Raider franchise, Lara Croft is on a mission to retrieve a weapon that apparently has the capacity to destroy the world as we know it. OK, so you've heard that one before, but not like this. Lara's movements are fluid, not tethered to some invisible grid like previous versions. And each level presents beautiful scenery that impresses the eye, at first, and then the brain as you find much of it is meant to be manipulated.

One thing I really liked about this new version is the over-abundance of checkpoints. If you've ever done battle with some wicked bad guys, slaughtered them all, only to get tripped up by a landmine, die, and have to do it all over again, you'll love these checkpoints because they ensure you never go too far before having to start over again. This is also a game that's welcoming to newcomers of both the game and the Xbox 360. Every time Lara needs to do something she hasn't done before, the game tells you which buttons to push. Be sure to make use of the binoculars and switch them to RAD (remote analysis device) mode. Oftentimes, if

you're stuck on a level, the data you get from the binoculars will help you figure out what you're supposed to do. Each level is impressively different from the last, and animations are actually playable—they're not just there for you to watch anymore. Some of the bosses are a little stale. For instance, the battle with Takamoto becomes annoying because he keeps repeating the same thing over and over again. Some more dialogue would've been nice for that one.

Otherwise, you're talking about a very enjoyable, playable and rewarding gaming experience. —Brian Ploskina

PSP Game

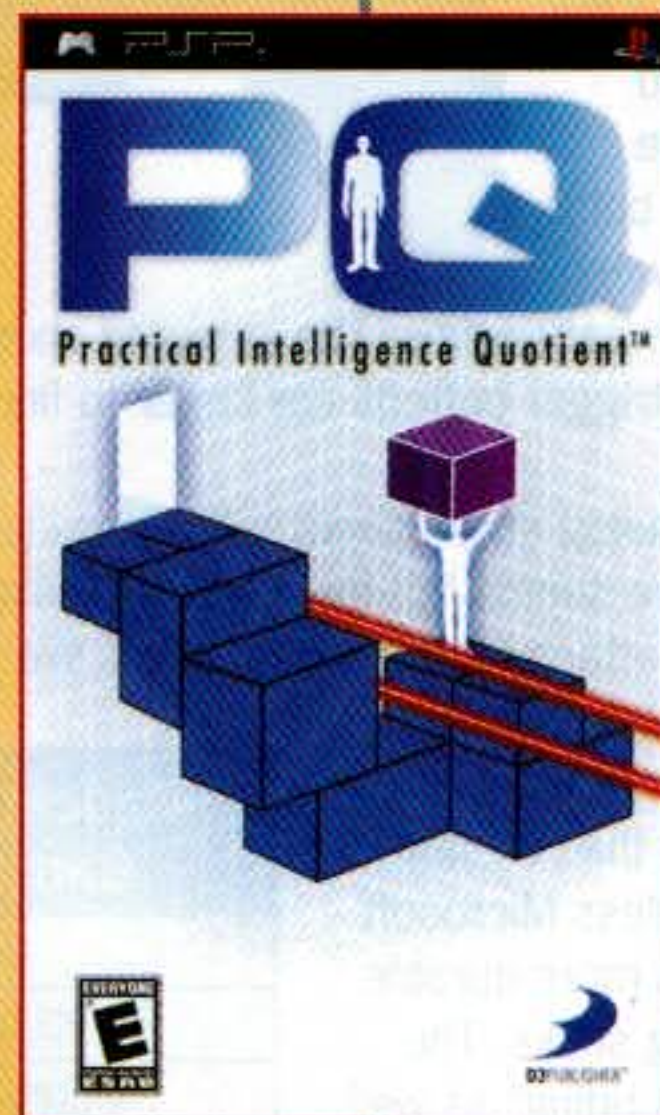
PQ: Practical Intelligence Quotient

Trying to find a video game that either doesn't involve senseless killing (see *Hitman 2*) or sports is a real challenge these days, which is why I was attracted to PQ. It's a puzzle game designed to test your smarts. The challenge is only with yourself.

You're presented with a series of graphical 3D puzzles, mazes with obstacles (blocks, lasers, escalators, doors...), which you must navigate through in order to get to the next puzzle, and so on, through endless levels. The goal, roughly, is to track the time it takes you to solve each puzzle and then calculate an IQ based on how well you did.

I don't remember IQ tests being this fun when I was in grade school, and I don't know how meaningful these results actually are, but nonetheless, I was quickly addicted. Some of the puzzles are maddening, while others seem easy. There's a real satisfaction when a particularly sticky one suddenly opens up before your eyes and you see the simple solution that eluded for 10 minutes. PQ is the kind of game you can pick up for a few minutes to kill time or get engrossed in for an hour.

It won't make you smarter, but it is fun. —Grant Clauser



Xbox 360 Game

Hitman: Blood Money

You'd think, if you played *Grand Theft Auto* enough, that killing people in a video game would become an innocuous experience. But the gruesome ways in which Agent 47 takes out his targets in *Hitman: Blood Money*, combined with the realistic design of the Xbox 360 version, can make you cringe with the same recoil one feels when watching a Rob Zombie film (rent *House of 1,000 Corpses*). If you can stomach the violence, you'll wind up with a satisfying game experience that combines beautiful scenery with dynamic characters. The game starts with a practice level, helping you learn the controls. This is key because the *Hitman* series works

differently than other shooters. Once you begin the game, it can be difficult to figure out what you're supposed to do. Here's the key to getting through most levels: If you're not allowed to go into a room, find someone who is, kill or sedate him, and steal his clothes. This isn't as easy as it seems, as you'll often have to find creative ways to "take care of" someone when no one else is looking. You'll also need to hide the bodies if you want to keep the enemy from being alerted to your presence. Fortunately, there's a healthy supply of empty body-sized boxes on each board. Bonus: The music and sound effects in this game will please anyone with a surround sound audio system.

—Brian Ploskina